

Entertainment Weekly

#775 • July 23, 2004

Mr. Nice Spy

How BOURNE's
Matt Damon
Became A
New Kind Of

**Colin
Farrell**
A Full
Frontal
Interview

**Ashlee
Simpson**
TV's New
Reality
Rocker

PLUS!

16

**GUILTY
PLEASURES**

'Blind Date'
Mister Rogers
And...
Kevin Costner



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Entertainment WEEKLY

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ON THE COVER Matt Damon photographed for EW by Gavin Bond in Rome on June 22, 2004



Barrel of laughs: Matt Damon declares his Supremacy (page 22)

PHOTOGRAPH BY GAVIN BOND

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY 3

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PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS MCPHERSON

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY 5



"This should have been Ray Charles' cover. You could have pushed back the Batman marketing a week to honor a legend."

JENNIFER D. LAC KAMP
Los Angeles

Bale de Jour

I STOPPED DEAD IN MY TRACKS and stared openmouthed when I saw your cover. I'll have to buy a few extra copies of this issue—mine is getting waterlogged with drool! I have been in love with Christian Bale for years, and this will be the first Batman movie I've had even a remote interest in. It's great to see one of the most talented actors of my generation finally getting the mainstream attention he has (admirably) never sought but so greatly deserves.

BETHANY LAWRENCE
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CHRISTIAN BALE COULDN'T have been a better choice for the cover of your Must List. For years now, I have continually been impressed by his acting abilities. From his incredible film debut in *Empire of the Sun* to his brokenhearted loyalty to the March sisters in *Little Women* to his cold, murderous turn as the bored egomaniac Patrick Bateman in *American Psycho*—his range as an actor is hard to match by many of his generation. To say nothing of independent turns in unique films like *Metroland* and *Velvet Goldmine*. I can't wait to see *The Machinist*, and

if anyone can breathe life back into the Dark Knight, it's Bale.

KELLY A. JOHNSON
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CHRISTIAN BALE TOPS YOUR Must List this year even though he doesn't have a movie coming out this summer (*Batman Begins* is next year, folks) and he's rarely had a box office hit or won a major acting award. Kudos to Warner Bros. for starting the Batman PR machine a year in advance, but really, EW, don't you remember putting *Josie and the Pussycats* on the cover? This should have been Ray Charles' cover. You could have pushed back the inevitable Batman marketing a week to honor a legend.

JENNIFER D. LAC KAMP
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Los Angeles

Remembering Genius

ALLOW ME TO QUOTE YOUR article on Ray Charles: "Five decades ago, a blind orphan sat at a piano and belted out raw yet sophisticated songs that forever changed music" ("Ray Charles, 1930–2004"). EW goes on to say Charles was a "genre-bending musical superhero" who was "known as the Genius of Soul [and] had a significant hand in inventing modern popular

music." EW has obviously acknowledged Charles' magnificent talent and contribution to music. So why on earth didn't he earn a spot on your cover? One would think that a man who "forever changed music" deserves the honor before the star of *Batman Begins*.

STEPHANIE SILVESTRI
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Narragansett, R.I.

'Scape' Vote

I WAS SO EXCITED TO SEE that you included *Farscape* on this year's Must List! The show is amazing, and it is definitely at the top of my must list! I'm one of those fans who fought long and hard to get this brilliant, quirky, intelligent, romantic show back, and I can't wait for the miniseries in October! I hope EW will be doing an article on *Farscape: The Peacekeeper Wars* in the fall!

LEE VIBBER
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Casting Doubt

WITH HOLLYWOOD CONSTANTLY attempting to remake its classics, I am surprised it still doesn't know how to get them right (News & Notes). I am excited to see the new *Manchurian Candidate* because of the great cast they put together, but *The Stepford Wives* had a good cast and that was a train wreck. Future remake projects need to worry about getting the script right before spending big bucks on an A-list cast.

JEREMY SHEARER
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Medina, Ohio

CLARIFICATION: Larry McMurtry's screenplay of *Brokeback Mountain* was cowritten by Diana Ossana (*The Must List*).

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Our website is the only place to get Ken Tucker's reaction to the Emmy nominations (which were announced by Edie Falco, above). Plus, you'll find a complete list of the nominees and photos of the contenders at ew.com/emmys.

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JULIE ANDREWS

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NEWS notes

07/23/04

The Naked Truth

Colin Farrell talks candidly about the infamous nude scene you won't see, as well as his next big part. by Dave Karger

WE NOW INTERRUPT THIS family publication to bring you...Colin Farrell. The normally potty-mouthed 28-

year-old actor is going to need a few more dashes in his vocabulary today, since the topic at hand is Warner Independent's *A Home at the End of the World*, his understated indie film (out July 23) that has become better known as "that movie where he's naked but it was apparently 'too distracting' so they've cut it out." It does, however, feature a remarkably subtle turn by Farrell, who evolves vividly from long-haired Ohio teen to assured, though sexually ambiguous, young adult. Over a late-morning snack of Camels and a bottle of Pacifico in Beverly Hills, Farrell comes clean about his allegedly offending appendage, the film's newly added same-sex kiss, and the similar controversy that's sure to follow his next film, *Alexander*.

When I was watching the movie, the main thing that came to mind was... Bad wig?

Well, that, and I wonder why you wanted to do this movie in the first place. Your character, the ultra-naïve Bobby, is so different for you. My agent passed me the script, and



Farrell and Roberts in *A Home at the End of the World*

I read it in Dublin on me couch. I think I called him at four or five in the morning and left him a message on his voice-mail. I hadn't read anything like it. It was just very gentle. It was about people whose lives are changing and molding and about loss. I had never

read anything so f---in' intense on the idea of love, yet didn't hit it with a hammer.

You had to read for the director, Michael Mayer, correct? If somebody won't let me do something that I want to do, I'll read for it. I'll never be beyond reading for s---. I read for *Alexander* as well. Having said that, it's nice to get offered things; don't get me wrong. I hope everyone doesn't start saying, "We've got to read him for everything!"

So how did your salary for this compare with your bigger movies? I made two grand a week on this. But look, man, I'm never going to be on the breadline, you know? I'm fine. I have things in place. I have a son now [10-month-old James with ex-girlfriend Kim Bordenave], and I know he's always going to be okay for education and health. I don't fly planes, I don't like expensive cars, and I don't want a big house with a pool.

Besides the wig, what was the biggest challenge in playing this part? When so much



importance is placed on a particular energy that you've become known for, whether it's brooding or swagger or being butch, it's very easy for the human mind to find comfort in being recognized as one thing, which can become a form of self-imprisonment as an actor. So I suppose [the challenge was] for me to break out of that and be as open and weak and simple as Bobby was.

I can't open a paper these days without reading something about your nude scene. Are you surprised by all the attention it's gotten? Yeah, man, I mean, f--- me! Who gives a f---? Apart from the readers of *The Advocate* maybe, who wants to see Colin Farrell's c--- that much? And let me tell you, it ain't nothing to f---in' write home about. Someone told me that someone said it was fine but it was no Ewan McGregor!

I saw the early version with the scene, and it wasn't that big a deal, pardon the pun. [Laughs] No, it's nothing, man! I walk to a door and you see my c---, and I walk out of the shot. It's dark, and it's three inches, uh, seconds long.

But on the set, you felt it was important to do? Absolutely. But then you look at it in respect to the film and you say, Do you need it? I don't think it was needed. I think it was smart to cut it out. Now with all the f---in' press, it seems like a marketing ploy because [people] will go to see what they're *not* going to see. Myself, watching it, I thought that it was just...because people do bring a perception to the film, because of my personal record, my drinking and my womanizing and my laddishness, I just thought it was jarring. Now you see that I'm naked when I get into the bed with Dallas [Roberts, his male costar], and



IRISH EYES

Colin Farrell may consider himself overpaid, but over the course of just a few years he's proven to be a promising box office draw in starring roles (and three of his last four films opened at No. 1). *Alexander*, his first mega-budgeted star vehicle, will be his next big test.

FARRELL'S BOX OFFICE

		YEAR	GROSS
1	MINORITY REPORT, 20th Century Fox	2002	\$132.0 mil
2	▲ S.W.A.T., Columbia	2003	\$116.6 mil
3	DAREDEVIL, 20th Century Fox	2003	\$102.5 mil
4	THE RECRUIT, Touchstone	2003	\$52.8 mil
5	PHONE BOOTH, 20th Century Fox	2002	\$46.6 mil
6	HART'S WAR, MGM	2002	\$19.1 mil
7	AMERICAN OUTLAWS, Warner Bros.	2001	\$13.3 mil
8	INTERMISSION, IFC	2004	\$931,960
9	TIGERLAND, 20th Century Fox	2000	\$139,692

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Angelina Jolie and Farrell in *Alexander*

you see it in a much more beautiful, childlike, and Bobby way.

So it wasn't the studio that made the decision to cut the shot? It was you? Or Michael Mayer? Both of us together. And [producer] Tom [Hulce]. Everyone seemed to be on the same page.

The story I heard was that you were okay with it until people started asking you about it in interviews. No, because I haven't done any. This is the first interview. Aren't you honored?

But now what's been added back in the film is... My a--hole. That's in the next picture.

No, the rooftop kiss between you and Dallas. The kiss is back in? Good, yeah. It's a very important part of the story. It's very quick and very gentle. It's not exactly 9½ Weeks.

But there's been a lot of commotion over that as well, in addition to the controversy over the gay-cowboy movie *Brokeback Mountain*, where Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal ap-

parently aren't going to have a kiss. People, particularly in this country, there's too much lateral thinking—to really need to know why Heath and Jake aren't going to French-kiss *already*? Wait a minute. Go back and read the book. Think about maybe why they won't. Don't just think, They're playing gay characters; are we going to see some [sex]? It's so obvious. I know one thing, when *Alexander* comes out, I don't have a kiss with Jared [Leto], but I have a sex scene with the woman who plays my wife. And there will be *blue murder* as to why do we see him have sex with Rosario Dawson, but we don't see it with [Leto]? Nobody will stop to think; they'll only see what's on the surface.

But Warner Independent didn't add the kiss until the last minute. Someone must have been afraid of including it. [The studio declined to comment.] I've made a career built on fear. The fear that people are going to miss the boat. I got paid more money after *Tigerland* than I should have gotten paid. And more money for *Hart's War* after that, because people go, "No, he's gonna hit at some stage; we just wanna be the ones to make him hit." "Offer him that? But he's only done..." "F--- it! Someone else will give it to him!"

So would you be okay if they put the nude shot back on the DVD? That'd be totally gratuitous. It's not like a director's cut. That would now creep me out. I would prefer it to be in the original than have it put on the DVD. 'Cause to have it put on the DVD, that's to sell [nudity]. And that's when I'd come in with me f---in' hands up, to be honest with you. Would they have it on "Special Features: Deleted C---"? ■

Summer 2004

Greetings,
Camp eBay is great. I love it here. I learned how to bid, buy & sell. It's so easy. I could win an eBay gift certificate, \$10,000 cash or free ice cream for a year!!! Well I better get going. I don't think I'm ever coming home. Oh wait I am home in front of my computer.

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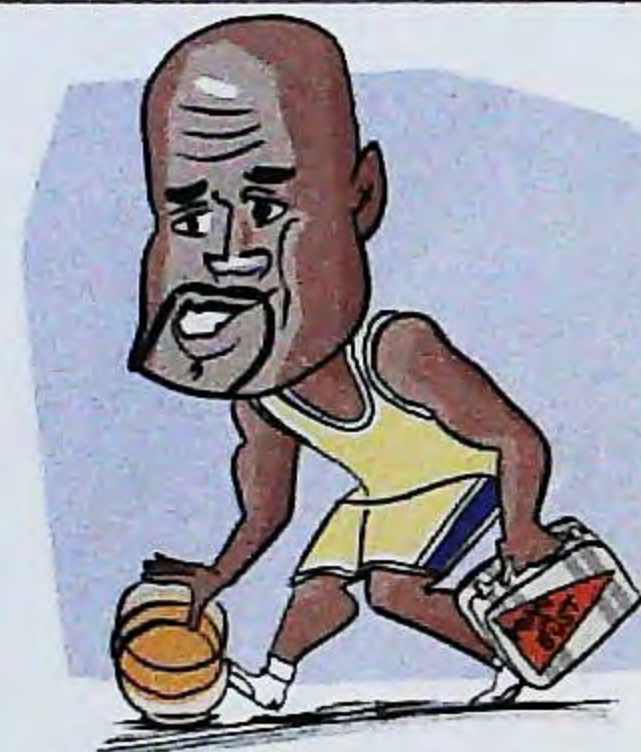
by Dalton Ross

① **UPN TO AIR REALITY SHOW ABOUT AMISH PEOPLE PARTYING IN L.A.** "Foremost in our minds...was to treat with respect the young Amish people," said UPN's president, who presumably then yelled, "PSYCH!" at the top of her lungs.

② **KINKY CAMERON DIAZ ONLINE VIDEO** Pay \$39.95 to watch Diaz whip a guy in chains and then go topless. Not such a rip-off when you consider alternatives like *The Sweetest Thing*.

③ **SEAN CONNERY TO PUBLISH MEMOIRS** Chapter 1: The Day I Met Honey Ryder. Chapter 2: The Day I Met Pussy Galore. Chapter 3: The Day I Met Q for Lunch. (Short chapter.)

④



THE SHAQ AND KOBE SAGA CONTINUES

Sorry, Kobe, but I always side with the dude sporting the Fu Manchu 'stache.

⑤ **JEOPARDY!'S KEN JENNINGS PASSES THE \$1 MILLION MARK** Whatever...nerd! (I have jealousy issues.)

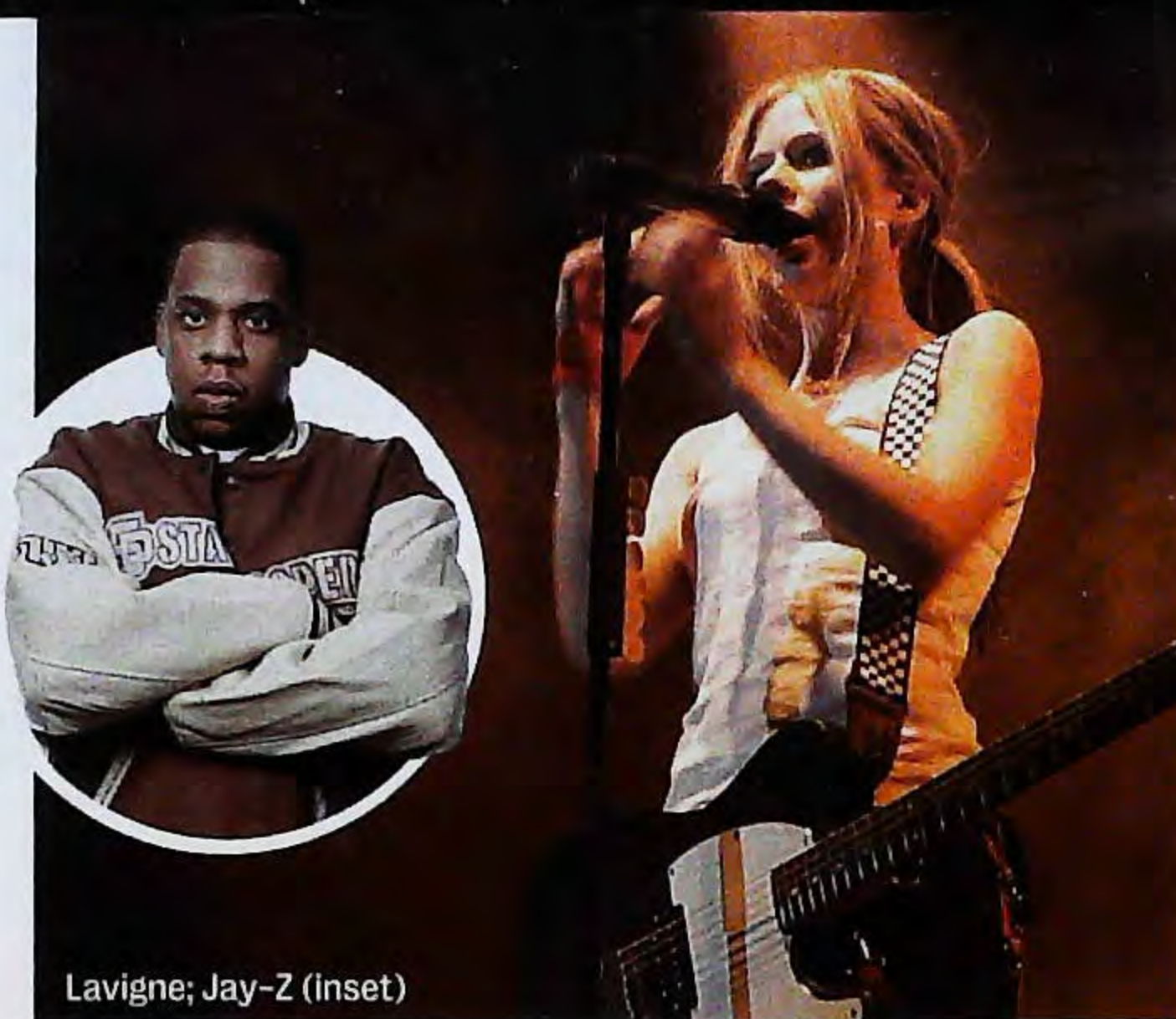
⑥ **JUSTIN GUARINI IS GOING TO VASSAR!** At least to appear in the Beach Boys' stage show *Good Vibrations*. Because evidently the song-on-sand flick *From Justin to Kelly* has made him an expert on all things beach. As well as all things really, really sucky.

⑦ **BACHELOR BOB GETS MARRIED** It's the *least* dramatic wedding ceremony yet!

⑧ **SPIDER-MAN STAGE MUSICAL REPORTEDLY IN THE WORKS** Apparently, with great power also comes the great responsibility to put on a tacky tourist-trap show. What, is Dr. Octavius going to turn into a break-dancing octopus or something? Why, that's almost as insane as...

⑨ **MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL STAGE MUSICAL IN THE WORKS** What did I tell you?

⑩ **SHARON STONE SAYS BASIC INSTINCT 2 MAY BE BACK ON** Cross your fingers. And your legs.



Lavigne; Jay-Z (inset)

Bleep Year

Behold a new age of music censorship

SURE, PROFANITY IS BAD, kids—but someone has to draw the line on self-censorship. No longer content to wait for the FCC to issue its pricey indecency fines, some programmers are making preemptive cuts to potentially objectionable song lyrics. And a few of the changes are killing our summer-music buzz.

In the hip-hop world, where raunch is the name of the game, Jay-Z has "99 problems, but a [blank] ain't one" (or so it goes on stations like Las Vegas' KLUC). It's not the nicest way to describe an ex, but it's the chorus, so sans the word *bitch*, why play it at all?

More puzzling, MTV trimmed *pants*—but not *ass*—from Avril Lavigne's "Don't Tell Me" ("...will get you in my pants/I'll have to kick your ass"). "There's a very fine line between *pants* and *ass*" is all an MTV spokesman will say.

That fine line disappears at NYC's Hot 97, where *ass* has been dropped from Ludacris' "Blow It Out." Says VP of programming Tracy Cioherty: "Things that we would have thought nothing of saying before, we now have to question whether it's acceptable." So much for a rerelease of "The Bitch Is Back." —Whitney Pastorek

Is It Just Us...



THE POLAR EXPRESS

...Or do the blank eyes, waxy skin, and slo-mo jellyfish moves of the shiny, happy children in the trailer for *The Polar Express* (out in November) creep you out? We're all for the wonders of CG animation (and Tom Hanks voicing CG nice guys), but it's been nine years since *Toy Story*'s zombie tots (top right) gave us the willies. Isn't it time you computer geeks stop giving *real* kids nightmares before Christmas? —Karyn L. Barr



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—Mr. Wendy, "Unofficial" Spokesman

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Movin' On Up



to Hepburn and Tracy's nervous liberals. In 1971, producer Norman Lear cast her in CBS' *All in the Family*, on which she originated the role of Louise. Four years later, Sanford and on-screen husband Sherman Hemsley (left) earned a spin-off.

The Jeffersons (1975-1985) was a breakthrough—as known for its catchy theme song (“Movin’ On Up”) as for its frank, funny take on a newly bourgeois black family. Viewers relished Louise’s slow-building tirades toward testy George, and so did Em-

ISABEL SANFORD—WHO DIED at 86 of natural causes July 9 in L.A.—shared screen time with the likes of Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy. But it was her 14-year run as TV’s Louise (“Weezy”) Jefferson that sustained her popularity.

The gravel-voiced NYC native—who’d acted since she was a child—got her big break near the age of 50. In 1965, she appeared in Broadway’s *The Amen Corner*, and made her big-screen debut in 1967’s *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* as the disapproving maid

my voters, who in 1981 awarded Sanford the first (and so far only) lead-actress comedy statuette given to an African American.

In January, Sanford, who’d kept Weezy alive over the years in TV and movie guest spots and Old Navy commercials, received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame; a month later, she lent her voice to an episode of *The Simpsons*. Says Lear, “We have lost one of the most naturally funny performers and great human beings that I’ve known.” —Nicholas Fonseca

Taste Test

Promo Gone Wild

Plugging its series about homicidal housewives, *Snapped* (right), Oxygen sent out handheld massagers—meant to relieve blood-thirstiness—to the media. Plus a Snap-Oh!-Meter quiz rates your potential for “snapping.” Because domestic violence is very, very funny. —Timothy Gunatillaka



The Deal Report by Gregory Kirschling



BARRYMORE

MOVIES A couple of hours before meeting Jennifer Aniston for their very first rehearsal, *American Beauty*’s Mena Suvari phoned the Deal Report. She’s playing Aniston’s little sis in a still-untitled comedy by *Ocean’s Eleven* writer Ted Griffin, which follows Aniston as “she starts to discover that her family was the basis of *The Graduate*.”

What? “It’s complicated,” admits Suvari. Mark Ruffalo plays Aniston’s fiancé, and Kevin Costner ages gracefully as the Ben Braddock type who might be her real dad. “It’s just so twisted,” says Suvari, soon to be seen in *Beauty Shop* and currently arcing on *Six Feet Under*. And is her character gonna get with Claire on that show or what? “I can’t remember,” she cracks.... That Superman movie, the one Tim Burton was supposed to make with Nicolas Cage 10,000 years ago, is like a big hunk of kryptonite. An un-deal: *Charlie’s Angels* director McG just detached himself from it.... The Fantastic Four are cast. *The Shield*’s Michael Chiklis is the Thing, *Dark Angel*’s Jessica Alba is the Invisible Woman, *King Arthur*’s loan Gruffudd is Mr. Fantastic, and *The Perfect Score*’s Chris Evans is the Human Torch. The movie’s a sizzling July 4, 2005, tent-pole.... Jimmy Fallon and Drew Barrymore may team up for *Fever Pitch*, adapted from a memoir by *About a Boy*’s Nick Hornby. Have you read Hornby’s “Stuff I’ve Been Reading” column in *The Believer* magazine? It’s great.

BOOKS A big thumbs-up for Augusten Burroughs, the guy who wrote *Dry* and *Running With Scissors*. Now—on top of two essay collections he has coming out in ’04 and ’06—he’s getting seven figures from St. Martin’s to write a Christmas essay collection, a full-length essay collection, and a whatever-Augusten’s-next-book-is. “I’ve sold a publisher every action and thought of mine for the next three years,”

Burroughs says. “What I’m not sure they realize is that my only action is sitting, and all my thoughts revolve around candy, dogs, or TV.” That takes Burroughs through 2008, “at which time,” says his agent, “he will spontaneously combust.” (Additional reporting by Karen Valby)



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(Clockwise from top left) CSI; Law & Order; Without a Trace; Everybody Loves Raymond

Everybody Loves Reruns

There's a surprising trend on TV this summer, and for once it has little to do with reality. by Lynette Rice

THIS IS SO NOT HOW IT'S done in *The O.C.* Last August, Fox's breakout soap attracted 8.4 million viewers, helping fuel network programmers' fantasies about summer's power to launch new shows. Alas, no new Fox series this summer—scripted or otherwise—has come close to matching *The O.C.*'s sizzling debut: *The Jury*, at 3.7 million, appears ready to declare a mistrial; only 4.7 million people are testing the waters of *North Shore*; just 5 million viewers are placing their bets on *The Casino*. And the other networks' summer originals (we're using that term lightly) aren't doing much better: NBC's *For Love or Money 3* and *Who Wants to Marry My Dad?* are down 22 percent and 18 percent, respectively, versus their debuts a year ago, while ABC's

The Ultimate Love Test has seen a double-digit drop from the same time slot last year.

For all the talk about year-round programming—not to mention the death of the sit-

com—most originals are down in viewers this summer, while reruns, of all things, are up. Of the 10 most-watched shows in the last two months, only *The Amazing Race* is completely

original. *CSI* remains the most popular show at 14.8 million, followed by *Without a Trace* and *CSI: Miami* (both at 12.9 million). "Honestly, I'm not surprised," says Fox's scheduling guru Preston Beckman. "Episodic procedural dramas and hit comedies have always repeated well. I think the big reality successes of the past few summers made it seem like repeats are dead." The obvious dividend for CBS? Between its stellar repeats and returning reality shows (*The Amazing Race* and *Big Brother 5* are pulling 10.3 million and 9.5 million, respectively), the network has a strong promotional platform for launching a fall schedule. NBC can rely on the strength of *Law & Order* repeats, but other than *Last Comic Standing* (8.9 million viewers and on the fall schedule), the net has had little luck landing a solid summer reality franchise to help plug its new season. "It's tricky with reality. There is such a high burn rate," says NBC entertainment president Kevin Reilly.



MUSTY TV

The Amazing Race is the only top-10 series not in repeats this summer.

REPEATED HITS		VIEWERS*
1	CSI, CBS	14.8
2	WITHOUT A TRACE, CBS	12.9
3	CSI: MIAMI, CBS	12.9
4	60 MINUTES, CBS	11.8
5	EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND, CBS	11.7
6	TWO AND A HALF MEN, CBS	11.6
7	LAW & ORDER, NBC	11.5
8	COLD CASE, CBS	10.9
9	LAW & ORDER: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT, NBC	10.3
10	▲ THE AMAZING RACE, CBS	10.3

*IN MILLIONS, MAY 31-JULY 11, 2004

SOURCE: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH

Spotlight on STEVE CARELL

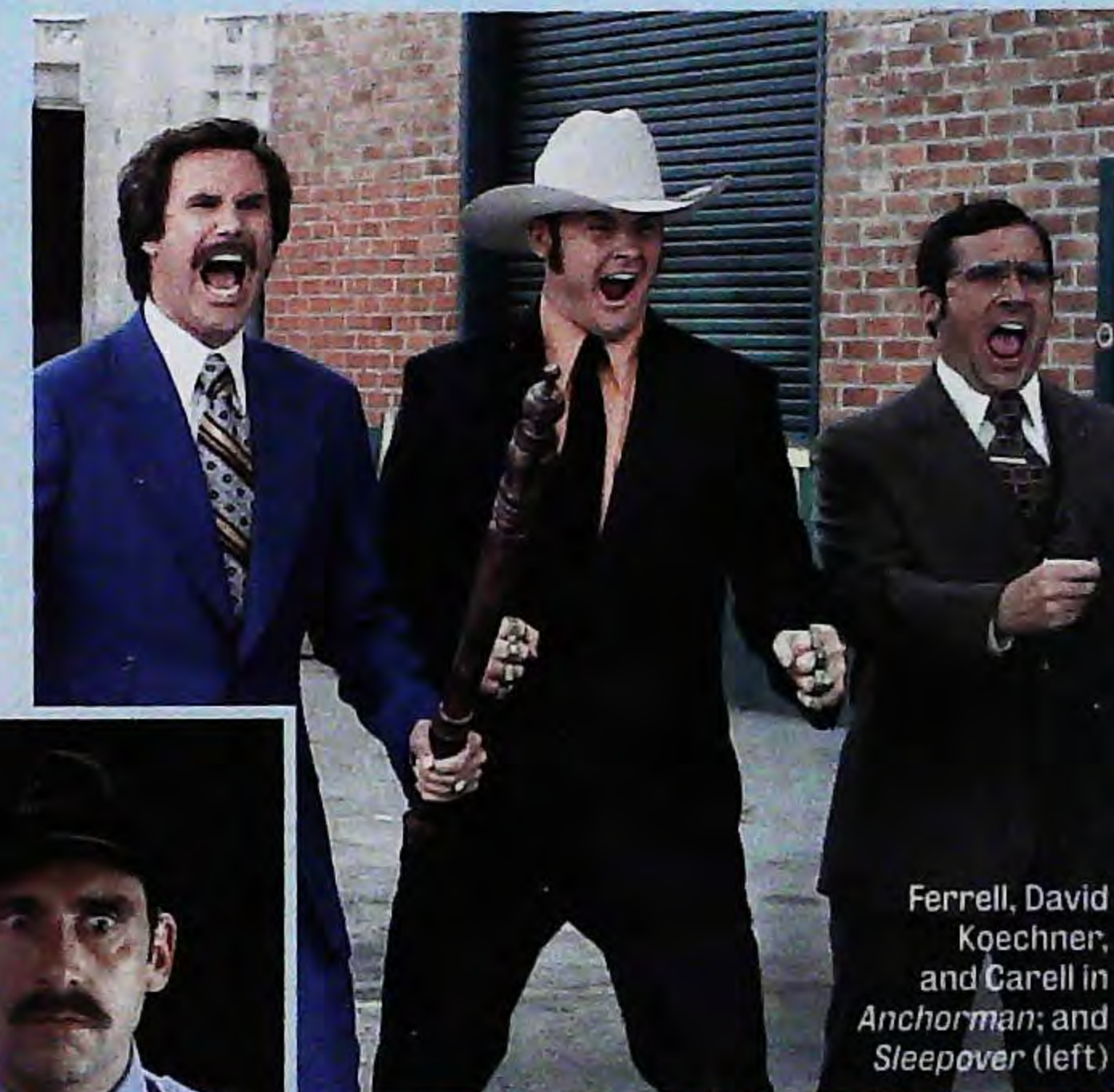
Anchor's Man

The *Daily Show* alum steals the show again

"I'm the idiot," says *Daily Show* vet Steve Carell of his on-screen persona. "I've cornered the market.... Apparently, it comes naturally and it's not too much of a stretch for me." As *Sleepover*'s kid-hatin' security guard and *Anchorman*'s mentally challenged weatherman, Carell found he didn't have to dig deep. "I have never done any research at all," he says. "I think it really shows with my subtle and textured performances."

Ever the master of deadpan self-deprecation, Carell, 41, is hardly a fool. With the New York-based *Daily Show* mostly behind him, the actor—who now lives in L.A. with his wife, fellow *Daily Show* alum Nancy Walls, and their two young kids—totally kills as *Anchorman*'s candle-eating, falsetto-singing "Idiot savant without the savant," much as he stood out as a gibberish-spewing newsman in *Bruce Almighty*. His segue out of cable continues with a likely lead part as a ruthless real estate entrepreneur in the animal comedy *Furry Vengeance*; another appearance alongside Will Ferrell, in Woody Allen's *Melinda and Melinda*; and, of course, the starring role in NBC's warily anticipated remake of the BBC modern classic *The Office*, due sometime next year.

"It's a very high standard to try to come up to," Carell admits. "The original *Office* has an enormous loyal fan following, so you



Ferrell, David Koechner, and Carell in *Anchorman*; and *Sleepover* (left)

can't help but be a little timid about going into something like that." Still, the network has ordered six episodes, meaning Carell takes on the daunting task of re-creating Ricky Gervais' painfully clueless nitwit of a supervisor when shooting resumes

in September. Carell is aware of the challenge, likening his dilemma to that of another fellow who replaced a lead on a favorite show, *Bewitched*. "I'm like Dick Sargent! How do you make people forget Dick York?" Wait, which one was Dick York? —Joshua Rich



"It's a judgment call. Is it the next *Survivor* franchise, or, God forbid, is it another *Joe Millionaire* where you've been there, done that?"

Fox has taken the greatest risk, launching five new shows—including *North Shore* (its returning reality series *The Simple Life 2* is a bright spot, up 45 percent in its time slot)—as a way to get a head start on fall and avoid its usual October nightmare, when baseball takes over (and viewers forget to come back to Fox's series). "History shows that a network that's patient will be rewarded," says Beckman. "If you won't give your shows time to find an audi-

ence, you shouldn't have put them on in the first place."

"Fox is right," adds NBC's Reilly. "They just didn't have the shows to back up the strategy. But we've got to program in the summer."

In the meantime, says Beckman, "it's going to take viewers a while to accept that the networks are not just putting on scripted shows in the summer to burn them off. The fact that we brought our new shows on so quickly may have led to the false perception that these are not long-term projects for the network. But they are." Which isn't exactly reassuring if you've seen Fox's new comedy *Quintuplets*. ■

NECESSARY OBJECTS?

EW's Summer-Movie Product Watch

Personal expression is an important part of identity. So are cosmetics. This week: a cinematic salute to beauty!



Hard Candy The giggling girls of *Sleepover* use the supertrendy polish—along with Wite-Out—on their toes during a montage.



Brut This men's fragrance, the height of '70s he-manity, is left on the shelf in favor of *Anchorman*'s fictional Sex Panther cologne.



Body Paint *King Arthur*'s warriors—including a curlicued Guinevere—slap on the blue (just like in *Braveheart*!) and go to war.

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Hanes

➔ STYLE SHEET

The stars come out for...



CROW

NOT-SO-MELLOW YELLOW

It's a good cause, but did cyclist Lance Armstrong have to make yellow the new black? Giving props to the hue that the Tour de France leader traditionally wears, Armstrong's cancer foundation teamed with Nike for the yellow-intensive Live Strong fund-raiser. Girl-



friend Sheryl Crow and Tom Hanks are among the celebs wearing \$1 yellow Live Strong wristbands, while a recent benefit auction included a \$15,000 yellow Oscar de la Renta dress (right) and banana-colored Manolo Blahnik thigh-high boots. **The cause:** A **The complexion-flattery factor:** C- —Whitney Pastorek

CRACKIN' SKULLS

Aw, nostalgia. "It reminded me of the younger days," says rocker (and MTV newlywed) Dave Navarro of his skull-emblazoned Libertine jacket, "when I was a kid and got tattoos and things." (Other fans of the line: Mick Jagger and Brad Pitt.) But the Gothic designs



NAVARRO



from Libertine cofounders—and rockers—Cindy Greene (formerly of Fischerspooner) and Johnson Hartig are so right now. "You can wear it to an awards ceremony," says Greene. "Or an AA meeting." —Liane Bonin

The Shaw Report BY JESSICA SHAW

IN	FIVE MINUTES AGO	OUT
ORGANIC-FARM VACATIONS	MONASTERY VACATIONS	DUDE RANCHES
PET GOLDFISH	PET FERRETS	PET GECKOS
CUPPING	HOT-STONE THERAPY	ACUPUNCTURE



1



2

3

Juicy Couture

TV gets another *O.C.*-style fashion lift with The WB's stylish new hit *Summerland*

THE WB'S BEACHY HIT *SUMMERLAND* features more than its share of bikini-bared skin. But with best friends Ava (Lori Loughlin, above left) and Susannah (Merrin Dungey) starting their own clothing label—while raising Ava's suddenly orphaned niece and nephews—chic fashions play a key role. Here are some of the items we're summer lovin':

2 HI LO COUNTRY Haze throws together surfer gear and high fashion, mixing boutique finds with staples from chains like Urban Outfitters. She loves the one-of-a-kind designs made from vintage fabric at Principessa in Venice, Calif. The look is just as popular off screen. Says Dungey, "I should just sign my paycheck over to Principessa."

1 OH, CARRIE Stylish careers mean glam outfits. A recent episode featured a fashion show of Ava's trendy designs, which *Summerland* costume designer Roberta Haze calls "clubby and *Sex and the City*-ish."

3 THE RIGHT TO CHOOOS "I do a lot of flip-flops," says Haze of the thongs sported by the gals in the cast. "But when the episode calls for it, I do Jimmy Choos." —Jennifer Armstrong

Sony recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP.

SONY.

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NEWS + notes

Monitor

ENGAGEMENTS

She'd like to buy...a ring! *Wheel of Fortune* letter turner **Vanna White**, 47, and businessman Michael Kaye, 50, plan to wed. It will be the second marriage for both.

BIRTHS

The Daily Show host **Jon Stewart**, 41, and wife Tracey welcomed their first child, Nathan Thomas, on July 3 in NYC.

LAUNCHES

On July 12, Sirius Satellite Radio announced it has teamed with rapper **Eminem** (né Marshall Mathers), 31, his Shady Records label, and Interscope Records to create a "cutting-edge hip-hop music and lifestyle channel" to debut this fall.

COURTS

On July 9, socialite/reality star **Paris Hilton** (right), 23, dropped her violation of privacy rights complaint against Kahatani Ltd. Hilton had sued the Panama-based Internet company for allegedly distributing her infamous sex tape with Rick Salomon... On July 13, NBC filed suit against Paramount Pictures

PREMIERE *I, Robot's* **Bridget Moynahan** [with costar Will Smith on the red carpet July 7 in L.A.] said she'd use a personal—and presumably not evil—robot for housekeeping: "I don't like cleaning, ever. I'm not good at it."

and former *Access Hollywood* host **Pat O'Brien**, 56, over a media campaign for the upcoming show *The Insider*. The Peacock, which lost its request for an immediate restraining order, claims that O'Brien's contract forbids him to promote the competing show until September. Paramount reps say they are "pleased with the result." The next hearing is set for July 23.

ARRESTS

R&B singer **Bobby Brown**, 35, turned himself in to Atlanta jail officials on July 11, hours before a court-imposed deadline on misdemeanor charges that he hit his wife, **Whitney Houston**, 40, in December 2003. Brown signed for a \$2,000 bond and was released the same day. No court date has been set. Brown's lawyer says, "Hopefully, the charges will be re-

solved short of a trial."... On July 8, Velvet Revolver frontman **Scott Weiland**, 36, paid a \$390 fine for driving under the influence of prescription drugs on Oct. 27, 2003. The singer is undergoing court-ordered drug treatment in connection with previous arrests.... Rapper **Jadakiss** (né Jason Phillips), 29, was given two citations for misdemeanor drug and weapons charges by Fayetteville, N.C., police, who said they pulled him over for setting off firecrackers July 5. The rapper, who did not return calls for comment, is scheduled to appear in court July 28.

RESOLUTIONS

On July 12, Actors' Equity Association and the League of American Theatres and Producers reached a tentative agreement for a four-year production contract to replace the one that expired June 27, eliminating the threat of a strike that would have closed most Broadway shows.

RECOVERING

David Bowie, 57, underwent an emergency angioplasty on June 25 in Germany. He has canceled the rest of his European tour.

DEATHS

Jeff Smith (left), 65, PBS' *Frugal Gourmet* until a 1997 sex scandal sidelined his career, of heart disease, July 7, in Seattle.... Actress and teacher **Phoebe Brand**

Carnovsky, 96, a founding member of the Group Theater, of undetermined causes, July 3, in NYC.... Children's author **Paula Danziger** (*The Cat Ate My Gymsuit*), 59, of a heart attack, July 8, in NYC.... Stevie Wonder's ex-wife and collaborator, **Syreeta Wright**, 58, who co-wrote "Signed, Sealed, Delivered (I'm Yours)" and other hits, of complications from breast cancer, July 6, in L.A. —Michelle Kung, with additional reporting by Adam B. Vary and Whitney Pastorek



BAD DAY After months of increasingly erratic behavior, Courtney Love was hospitalized July 9—her 40th birthday. EMTs arrived at the singer's NYC apartment amid reports she had miscarried (Love's lawyer declined to comment). She was discharged July 12. And it gets worse: Because Love missed a July 9 court date on assault charges, a California judge docked her \$55,000 and issued a warrant for her arrest.



BOURNE

Some have called his post-Oscar career moves questionable, but with his new thriller 'The Bourne Supremacy,' **MATT DAMON** is sitting pretty

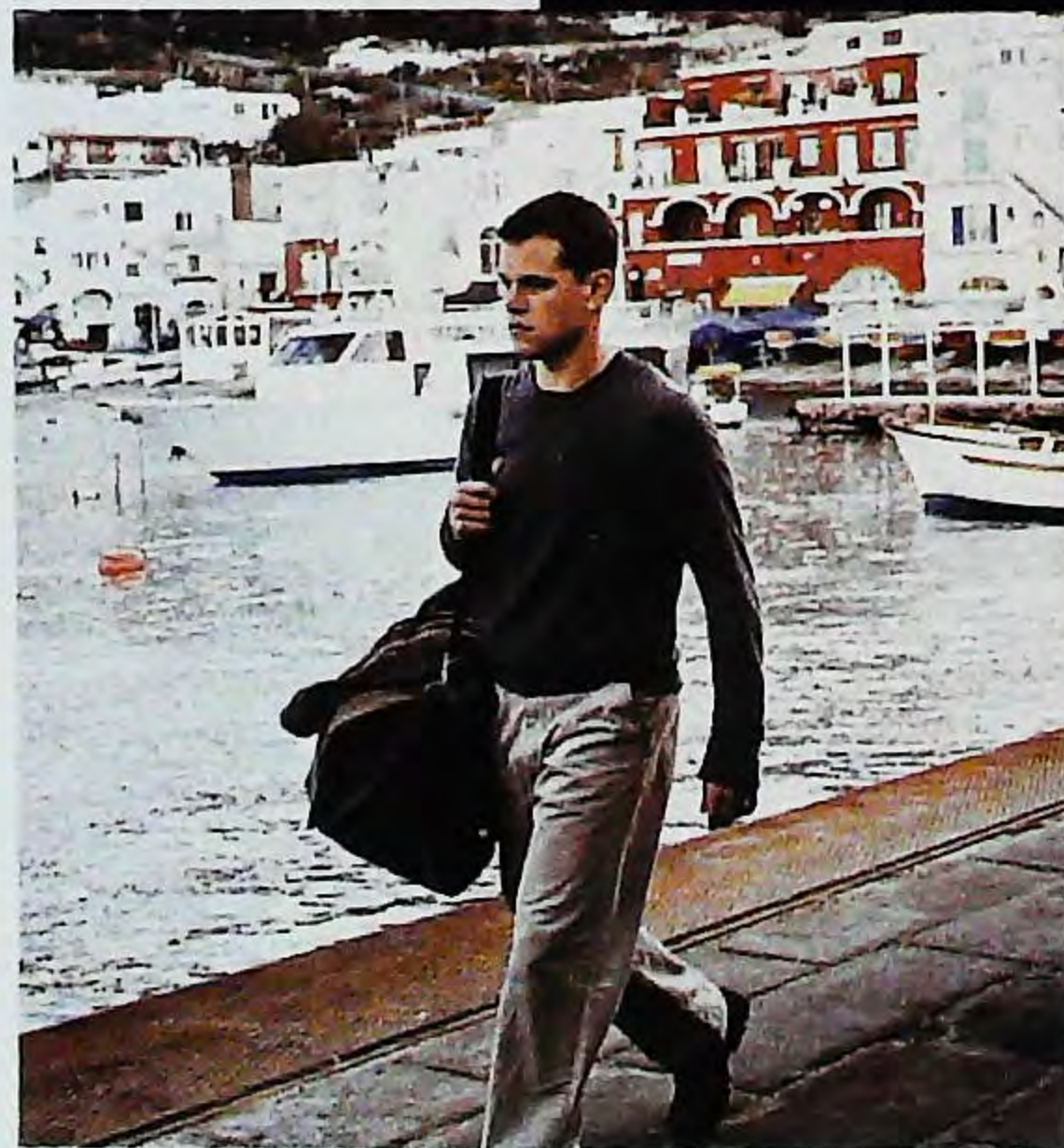


AGAIN

by Rebecca Ascher-Walsh Photograph by Gavin Bond

IT'S A DOOMSDAY-GRAY JANUARY MORNING IN Berlin, where the sidewalks are covered in ice and the temperature is hovering at 1 degree Celsius. But the streets feel positively balmy compared with the Alexanderplatz subway station, where shivering rush-hour workers are racing for their trains. Lost in their own thoughts—of a beach in Tahiti, if they're lucky—they miss the occasional posted signs that say “*Bourne Supremacy*,” meant to direct the film crew to the correct platform. They ignore the dozens of men, dressed in Aspen-ready ski bibs, posed behind cameras. And if they occasionally glance up at the person the cameras are aimed at, it's only because he's wearing fuzzy earmuffs so dorky it looks like his mama's still dressing him for the playground. • The cameras begin to roll, the earmuffs come off, and a teeth-chattering Matt Damon rearranges his open features into the gaunt glare of Jason Bourne, the title character of 2002's *The Bourne Identity*, and now, its sequel. For five hours, no one stops to stare. Then three teenage girls,

adrenally primed for excitement, finally catch the scent. At last, the shriek. • We know that Matt Damon is a movie star. We know this because if it gets \$15 million paychecks like a star, and carries a franchise like a star, it must be a star. Now, if only someone would tell him that, maybe he'd learn to send out a frequency audible to pedestrians. He might even go back to his trailer and defrost, instead of stuffing heat packs in his gloves and stubbornly remaining on the platform, fraternizing with the crew and going over script notes with producer Frank Marshall and director Paul Greengrass. But that's not how Damon wants it. What Damon wants is to be seen as a beer-drinking, baseball-watching guy from Boston who just happens to be making interesting choices, even if they don't always work. And at least none of them, unlike those of his famous best friend, involve a trayful of Harry Winston diamonds.



As far as decisions go, saying yes to *The Bourne Supremacy* (opening July 23) seems like a no-brainer. The \$65 million *Bourne Identity*, in which Damon played a laconic, amnesiac assassin who kicked, punched, and murdered his way through Europe, earned more than \$121 million and became a best-selling DVD. The film also ended neatly with Bourne and his lady love,

played by German actress Franka Potente, running off into the sunset. But as any thriller aficionado knows, no true hero gets to lie on a beach drinking piña colodas for very long.

So Bourne was called back to action for the \$80 million sequel with Greengrass, who made the small 2002 Irish film *Bloody Sunday*, directing. (*Identity* was helmed by Doug Liman, who had repeated clashes with the studio during filming.) Reteaming are *Identity* producer Marshall, screenwriter Tony Gilroy, and costars Potente, Julia Stiles, and Brian Cox. As for Bourne? He's still on the run, and he's still a melancholy, taciturn enigma, which suits Damon just fine. “Normally, I've played people searching for who

they are,” says the actor. “This was the first time I played a guy where instead of struggling with his identity, he had a real sense of self. Then, well, then he forgot it.” Damon might be able to relate—this is a guy who, after all, said only seven years ago that if he ever made \$10 million, he'd quit the game. “Yeah, well, I would,” he says with a grin. “If they made me.”

SIX MONTHS LATER, DAMON'S IN NEW YORK TO SHOOT AN alternate ending to *Supremacy* that's intended to wrap up the movie on a less ambiguous note. Although Damon considers the city home—it's where he owns an apartment—he's spent only two nights here in the last year. Tonight won't be the third: Just 14 hours after arriving, he's flying back to Rome, where he's been filming *Ocean's Twelve*, Steven Soderbergh's sequel to 2001's criminal romp *Ocean's Eleven*. Thanks to the manic tabloid coverage—check out Damon kissing his girlfriend, Miami bartender Luciana Barroso! Watch costars George Clooney, Brad Pitt, and Damon go Jet Skiing!—the actor has managed to stay in the American public eye, despite having spent the last year filming *The Brothers Grimm* with director Terry Gilliam in Prague, then *Supremacy* in Berlin.

The recent attention places Damon far from his comfort zone, but

“It's not something I have a knack for, the romantic lead,” admits **DAMON**



The actor on location in Italy (left), and showing his firepower

it's surely better than the state of things two years ago, when no one really wanted to see Damon in front of the cameras no matter what the activity entailed. Before *Bourne*, “I hadn't had a movie offer in I don't know how long—months and months and months,” remembers the actor, who, dressed in jeans and a baggy orange T-shirt that reads “Midget Trucking,” is scarfing down a cheeseburger and dipping his fries directly into the ketchup bottle. “My agent would call and say, ‘Matty, it didn't pan out this time.’”

And that was supposed to be the *good* time in Damon's career. The actor started working when he was 16, when he and buddy Ben Affleck scored a local commercial. They used the proceeds to commute from their homes in Boston to auditions in New York. “By the time I went to college,” says Damon, who dropped out of Harvard a year short of graduating, “I'd been on at least 40.” But despite post-collegiate roles in 1996's *Courage Under Fire*, for which he lost 40 pounds to play a heroin addict, a starring part in 1997's *The Rainmaker*, and the smallish title role in Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan* the following year, Damon remained firmly on the middle rung of young male actors. Ruling the category at the time were Matthew McConaughey and Will Smith, and roles generally fell into Damon's lap only after Chris O'Donnell had passed.



BOURNE has put Damon on the ephemeral "short list" of guys who get the good gigs—really good gigs

Then, pay dirt: Damon and Affleck wrote a small drama about a math prodigy named Will Hunting, which would win them not only a screenwriting Oscar but some long-earned movie-star muscle.

Affleck, who declined to comment for this piece, happily flexed his, jumping into the high-stakes, high-budget action realm with 1998's *Armageddon*. Damon, on the other hand, opted for the role of a troubled poker-playing student in 1998's *Rounders*, produced by Miramax, which had produced *Good Will Hunting* and subsequently signed Affleck and Damon to a multipicture deal. Damon followed *Rounders* with Anthony Minghella's dark drama *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, in which he played an expat sociopath opposite Jude Law and then-Affleck girlfriend Gwyneth Paltrow. The film made \$81 million, but received mixed reviews. "It was an incredible experience," says Damon, but "Anthony was coming off of *The English Patient*, so no one was particularly rushing to toot his horn, and I was coming off of *Good Will Hunting*, so it was the same for me."

Silence might have been preferable to the reactions to Damon's next two projects, which arrived barking at the cineplex. First was 2000's *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, a golf period piece directed by Robert Redford and costarring Will Smith. Damon's part was originally conceived for Redford, and the young actor knew early on he wasn't the right choice to fill those cleats. "Redford can play that guy, but it's not something that I have a knack for, the romantic



Damon's Bourne battles a foe (Marton Csokas)

lead. I had to say, 'I like the way you dance,'" Damon recites stiffly, still wincing at the line. "I kept trying not to laugh."

Vance earned \$31 million, which was good news only when compared with the \$15.5 million Damon's next project would scrape in: Billy Bob Thornton's Western epic *All the Pretty Horses*, based on Cormac McCarthy's novel. "Doing it was great. The sadness came afterwards," says Damon. "There's a version of it that I'm still as proud of as anything I've ever done. But people got scared. There was a \$50 million movie that everyone involved in wanted to be 3 hours and 12 minutes long." Not everyone: Cofinanciers Sony and Miramax asked for a major cut, and Thornton obliged with an under-two-hours version. "You can't cut 35 percent out of a movie and have it be the movie you intended," Damon continues. "Billy Bob got screwed. I was on the phone with him and Harvey [Weinstein] and Billy Bob said, 'I have maybe the rest of my life to make maybe five films that are really and truly great, and what you're telling me now is that this isn't going to be one of them.' It was truly awful. It's still the biggest disappointment of my career." (Damon is quoted in Peter Biskind's book about independent movies, *Down and Dirty Pictures*, as calling Weinstein a scorpion. "I said what I said," Damon elaborates, "but I meant that he's a businessman, and a very, very good one, and you've just got to keep that in mind when you're dealing with him." Weinstein, who is working with Columbia to release a DVD of the movie at its original length, responds: "Maybe he was feeling a little mad at me, so I think he let me have it. [Our] friendship will never change over anything.")

Thornton, who was hospitalized for a "viral infection" shortly after the experience, has only fond feelings for Damon, whom he

dragged to Nashville post-filming for a drunken weekend of race-car driving and, well, drunkenness, which culminated with the pair sitting on a roof and singing "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?" "I'd like to get hold of him and direct him in some twisted comedy," Thornton says. "He's got such an innocence about him on the surface, but he's about as innocent as I am."

Luckily, Damon didn't need vials of blood around his neck to prove that he could play less than wholesome, even if only on screen. The Monday after *Bourne Identity* opened, the actor was suddenly deluged with 30 offers, many of which were for parts older than a man-boy, with the emotional heft to go with it. But Damon passed on every one, instead signing up to play a conjoined twin opposite Greg Kinnear in the Farrelly brothers comedy *Stuck on You*.

What is *up* with Damon's taste in roles? While it may be confusing to observers, he shrugs and asserts it's of little concern to him. "I'd go back and make the same choices," he insists. "When these movies don't work, it's not for lack of trying. You're taking a big swing, and if it doesn't work out, it doesn't work out on a big scale." *Stuck on You* earned only \$34 million and tanked with critics, but Damon, whose relentless cheer can sometimes make him sound like a Walt Disney character, says, "It was the most fun to make. I'd work with the Farrelly brothers again in a second. I'd work with *everyone* I worked with again." When that earns him a you-have-got-to-be-kidding look, he responds, "I would!" Kinnear, who owns the couch on which Damon most likes to crash when he's in L.A., thinks it's a chemical thing. "It's a happy accident in his genetic code that doesn't allow him to be overly self-aware. He's just a really decent, good guy."

Damon may not be preternaturally gifted at knowing how to always make the most of himself on screen, but he's plenty shrewd about making the most of the fact that this is, once again, his moment. Ask that he confirm his asking price, even off the record, and he shrugs. He's too smart not to know, and too polite to tell you it's none of your business. But he's fully forthcoming about the fact that *Bourne* has put him on the ephemeral "short list" of guys who get the gigs—really good gigs—and this time he's grabbing at them. Although it means another year away from home, he's signed on for the thriller *Syriana* with Clooney, which *Traffic* screenwriter Stephen Gaghan will direct in Morocco, Geneva, and Washington, D.C., as well as Soderbergh's next drama, *The Informant*. After that, there may just be a project with Martin Scorsese. "I always swore that the thing that would keep me from taking time off would be if Scorsese had a role for me," Damon says, as if he can't believe the coincidence. "But I'm 33 years old. I don't need to snuggle up in bed with my pillow."

It's a nice justification, but Damon seems more propelled by the fear that at any second, the prom king will once again be asked to leave the dance. Indeed, one look at his best friend's downward career spiral would be enough to send shivers down anyone's spine: Affleck went from nailing the Jack Ryan franchise with 2002's *The Sum of All Fears* to falling off the talent radar with back-to-back disappointments *Daredevil*, *Gigli*, *Paycheck*, and *Jersey Girl*. Damon says the attention Affleck received during his time with J. Lo hasn't helped matters. "People get sick of seeing a certain person, and they revolt. The last thing you want to do is be the cover child of the tabloids. Monday, Ben has coffee, Ben goes to the bookstore, and then all the mystery is taken out of your life. And who the hell is going to pay \$10 to see your movie? But it'll quiet down for him."



With Stiles and director Greengrass on the Berlin set

LIVE TO INTEL

Feeling amnesia yourself?
A brief on Bourne's return

WHERE THE BOURNE IDENTITY LEFT OFF Damon was chilling out with his girl on a Greek Isle, his just reward for getting riddled with bullets, almost drowning, and in all, spending 119 minutes on the run trying to figure out who the hell he was and why the bad guys were chasing him. This time around, it's all starting to come back to him...and it ain't pretty. Especially with a Russian hitman and the CIA trying to track him down, sniper-style.

WHO'S NEW Oscar nominee Joan Allen, playing tough-as-nails CIA agent Pamela Landy, who's convinced Bourne is behind the murder of two agents. Karl Urban, who played Eomer in *The Lord of the Rings*, steps in as the Russian assassin.

WHO'S BACK Brian Cox and Julia Stiles as members of the CIA, and Franka Potente as Bourne's lover. Chris Cooper appears in flashbacks as the head of Treadstone, the now-defunct secret CIA branch that trained Bourne to be a killing machine.

NEW WEAPON A rolled-up magazine. Talk about power of the press...

SCENE TO WATCH FOR The car chase through the streets of Moscow, filmed with Greengrass' favored handheld cameras. "If Bourne ran, I wanted us to be running," Greengrass explains. When told that his technique worked so well that one audience member promptly puked during the scene, he exclaims, "Excellent!"

SO ARE WE GOING TO SEE A SUPREMACY SEQUEL? Says Damon, "I don't know where you'd go from this one." Ah, but he doesn't have to: The movies are based on a trilogy written by Robert Ludlum, which means two down, one to go...

LEAVE THE BULL BEHIND

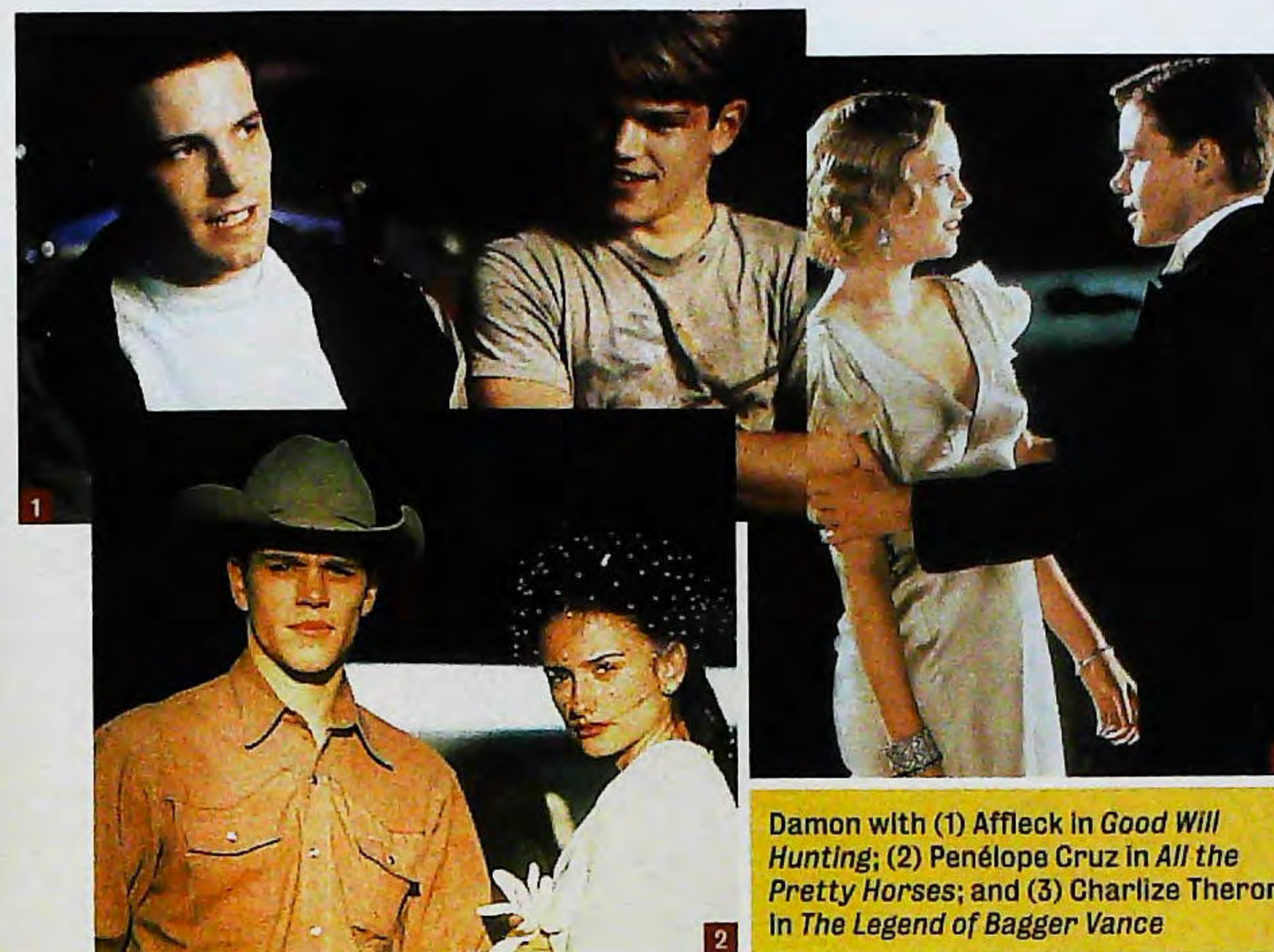
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Damon with (1) Affleck in *Good Will Hunting*; (2) Penélope Cruz in *All the Pretty Horses*; and (3) Charlize Theron in *The Legend of Bagger Vance*

"This is the most insecure profession," Damon continues. "Everyone is on shaky ground, I don't care who they are. Look at all the people who were stars 10 and 20 years ago. Not many of them are around. That doesn't mean you can't act. It just depends on what you're in it for. And if you're in it to be a movie star, you're f---ed. Because no matter who you are, that s--- will go away, I guarantee you."

And Damon, ever the pragmatist, has a backup plan. Of working with Soderbergh he says, "If one *hypothetically* wanted to direct, one could *hypothetically* pick up a lot of things. But I have to write something to direct." He and Affleck have been talking about reteaming on a screenplay since *Hunting*, but "we couldn't turn down the acting work," Damon explains. "It's really f---ing hard, after years of banging on closed doors, to have them open up in front of you and not go through them. I'm not looking for the black cloud to come," he continues. "I've just accepted that it will."

FOUR DAYS LATER, DAMON IS BACK in New York for another 24 hours. He's finished filming *Ocean's Twelve* in Rome, and he's pausing here to loop dialogue for *Supremacy* before heading up to Boston to spend the July 4 weekend with his family. Wearing the same orange T-shirt and jeans as days earlier, Damon collapses at an outdoor table of a downtown restaurant and launches into an apologetic explanation of why he's an hour late (which has already been prefaced by

two phone calls of apologies and explanation). He was due at the dubbing stage in midtown, but the car that was supposed to take him never came. So he hailed a cab and went to the address he'd been given, only to find there was no one there. Because he's never gotten around to owning a cell phone, he went next door to Kinko's and asked to borrow their phone to find out where he was supposed to be, and then, because they were nice enough to let them use their phone, he ran and bought them all coffee before going to the proper address, which made him even later to the dubbing, which made him even later for this date. Might he have skipped the coffee? "Nah," he says. "But I am rethinking the cell phone."

Two glasses of red wine, three courses, and several cigarettes later, Damon seems sated, and at home. He even removes his sunglasses, allowing passersby to gaze openly at him. For a beat, absolutely nothing. And then, as if on cue, a car with out-of-state plates screeches to a halt, and the driver begins gesturing wildly. Damon takes a deep breath and approaches. After several moments of what looks like a passionate interchange, Damon steps back to the curb and announces with an impish grin, "They wanted to know how to get to the theater." The driver rolls down his window, again calling out thanks. Damon waves back and begins to head for home, but now there's a saunter to his step. It's a beautiful summer day, and there's not a dark cloud in the sky. ■



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SISTER ACT

**ASHLEE
SIMPSON**
is nothing like
Jessica—except
for her career,
manager dad,
and MTV series.
by Neil Drumming



ASHLEE SIMPSON HAS HAD A ROUGH COUPLE OF DAYS. FORGET the run-in today with some overeager paparazzi—last night her ex-boyfriend Josh gave her the oh-so-cold shoulder at an L.A. nightclub. “I know this is really dorky,” says the younger sib of pop tart Jessica, “but when he was leaving I stood up and flipped him off. I was really mad. Really mad. He acted like he’d never met me before. I was like, ‘Okay, I can’t wait till you hear my album.’” Those familiar with MTV’s *The Ashlee Simpson Show* know Josh as the dispassionate, driver’s-capped cutie with the distinction of being the 19-year-old dancer-turned-actor-turned-singer’s “first heartbreak, first love, and, like, all that kind of stuff.”

Ashlee, the show and the singer, was devised by Simpson manager/patriarch/Svengali Joe. The series’ aim is to chronicle the creation of—and create buzz for—Simpson’s debut album, *Autobiography*, out July 20. Though she was initially against the idea (“I’d been around my sister’s cameras, and I was like, ‘There is no way that I’m going to do a reality show!’”), Dad prevailed, and his strategy seems to be working. The show, which premiered to 2.9 million viewers four weeks ago, continues to hold the majority of its lead-in, big sis Jessica’s *Newlyweds*; and Ashlee’s first single, “Pieces of Me,” is No. 3 on the SoundScan charts.

As anyone associated with the junior Simpson’s team will tell you, Ashlee is *no way the next Jessica*. They’ll even say it on TV: There’s an eerie scene during the first episode of *Ashlee* in which Geffen Records president Jordan Schur holds a strategy session with Ashlee and Joe Simpson. “We’ve got a lot of work to do,” he tells her. “We have to make sure that you’re the opposite of your sister.” Meekly sandwiched between her showbiz dad and Schur, Ashlee—who, true to Schur’s wishes, has traded in her Jessica-like blond tresses for a wicked, Joan Jett-black dye job—appears more at the mercy of powerful men. But the oft-overbearing Schur maintains that he was the victim of selective sound-biting and only had Ashlee’s individuality in mind. “Ashlee told me coming in: ‘I don’t want to be anything like that. I’m not like my sister. I like rock,’” he says. “I knew there’d be times when she wouldn’t understand me and would get pissed—which she did—and I don’t care about that. My job is to make the record great.” Simpson, who cowrote all the songs on the album, confirms: “Jessica and I are like day and night. She grew up listening to Celine Dion and Mariah Carey. I grew up listening to Alanis Morissette and Green Day.” By that standard, *Autobiography* is a success: It’s a Pretenders-influenced pop-rock showcase of Ashlee’s raspy, Courtney Love-lite delivery and packs enough vague-yet-honest teen-trospection to fill a 10th grader’s diary (see review, page 77).

Now effectively divorced from her two-year stint as sticky-sweet Cecilia on The WB’s *7th Heaven*, Simpson will likely have more trouble differentiating herself from angst-ridden Avril than from her sister. But *Autobiography* producer John Shanks (Melissa Etheridge, Michelle Branch) dismisses any parallel. “For a year it was like, Michelle, Vanessa, Avril,” he says of Branch, Carlton, and Lavigne, “which is like the Britney-Christina thing before that. Everybody wants to compare everybody. That’s because they’re too lazy to really listen to the whole record.”

As for Josh? “Guys come and go,” says Ashlee, who is now dating singer Ryan Cabrera, yet another Joe Simpson protégé, “but you’re the one that has to stay strong.” She adds, giggling, “Like, I got over him. I wrote ‘Pieces of Me’ about my new boyfriend.” ■



WHEN MIKE LAZZO, the creative guru in charge of the Cartoon Network's quirky Adult Swim nighttime block, drives to his Atlanta office every morning, he passes the city's shimmering IBM Tower. Next to it is the squat, inelegant Atlantic Center Plaza, an office tower built 14 years later as an intended complement to its neighbor. Lazzo, an architecture buff, considers this "pretender" to be a cheap, ugly imitation, but it does provide him a daily metaphorical reminder of the futility of trying to duplicate greatness. As he succinctly puts it in hack-cartoon terms, if the IBM Tower is 1990's adult-animation pioneer *The Simpsons*, then the Atlantic Center Plaza is 1992's bottom-feeding failure *Fish Police*.

- Emboldened with this passionate hatred for all things

THE TEAM

Faster than a flying meatball. More powerful than a litigious birdman. Able to leap from the couch to the refrigerator in a single bound. It's Adult Swim Team—the Cartoon Network's answer to Leno and Letterman!

by Josh Wolk

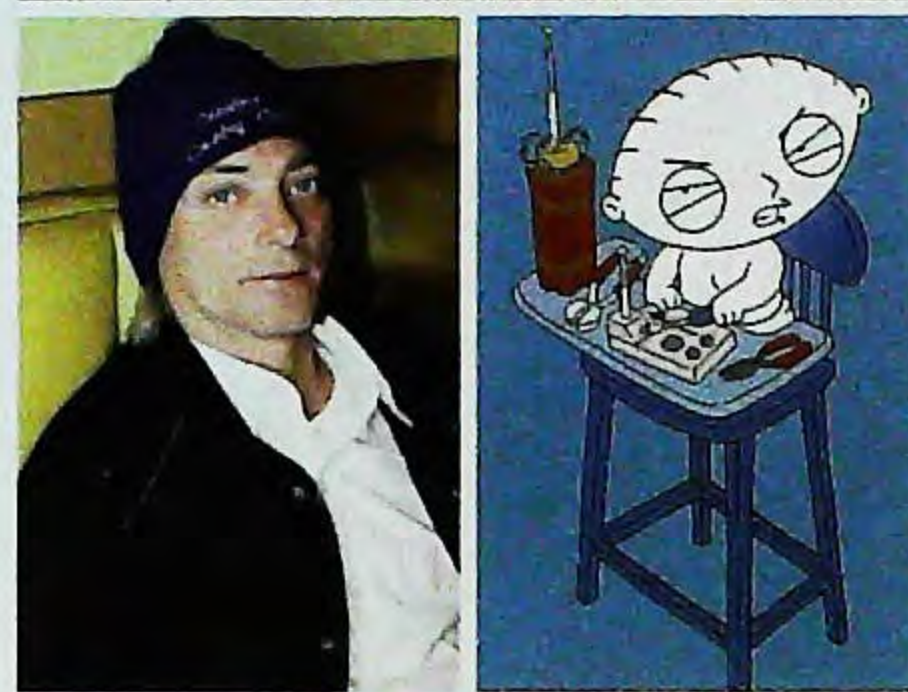
derivative, Lazzo has made the post-11 p.m. Adult Swim block home to some of the oddest, most subversive, and most inventively hilarious comedy on television. There's *Aqua Teen Hunger Force* (left), a breakout hit featuring a talking milk shake, carton of

french fries, and meatball who don't so much fight crime as bicker in their New Jersey bachelor pad and irritate their hairy-backed neighbor, Carl. Or *Harvey Birdman: Attorney at Law*, which turns an obscure Hanna-Barbera character into a lawyer who takes such all-star cases as defending the trench-coated Secret Squirrel on a flashing charge. Adult Swim has also cultivated a new audience for neglected network castoffs like *Futurama* and *Family Guy*. In fact, Fox recently commissioned new episodes of its canceled *Guy* after being shocked by the show's soaring, Swim-goosed DVD sales. (The network's night shift caters to robot geeks as well as comedy geeks, with anime like *Cowboy Bebop*.)

Thanks to the six-hour Adult Swim block, men weaned on cartoons are now making every night Saturday morning: The shows are fast rivaling Leno's and Letterman's ratings in the critical young-male demo, prompting the network to fund a development slate of a dozen original series, including shows by Seth Green and OutKast's Andre 3000. "When the broadcast networks were losing 18- to 34-year-olds, there were all these articles asking 'Where are they going?'" says Cartoon Network GM Jim Samples. "We wanted to call and say, 'We got 'em!'"

LAZZO, A 46-YEAR-OLD TURNER BROADCASTING LIFER WHO started in its shipping department 20 years ago, cocreated *Space Ghost: Coast to Coast* in 1994 for Turner's Cartoon Network. The meta-talk show, in which a D-list superhero interviewed C-list celebrities, was a reaction against the network's stagnating schedule of old Hanna-Barbera cartoons. "It was the mind-set of 'Let's take our glorious history of Saturday morning and whack it up,'" says Lazzo. *Ghost* was the template for future Adult Swim productions: cheap, simple animation illustrating absurdist dialogue delivered in a jerky, Thelonious Monkish comic rhythm that flouts all shticky cartoon conventions. Seven years later, Lazzo, an amiable, drawling Southerner whose shoulder-length blond hair is often tied in pigtails, persuaded the network heads to give him the late-night slots (as opposed to one misguided *hey, it worked for Nick at Nite* idea to air *Bonanza* and *Gunsmoke* reruns). With it came complete creative, if not financial, freedom: *Aqua Teen* costs about \$50,000 an episode, and *Birdman* about \$150,000, as compared to the reported \$2 million-plus price tag of NBC's upcoming *Father of the Pride*.

Lazzo now runs his after-hours club from a former carpet factory across the highway from the Cartoon Network offices. "Mike was like, 'We're gonna take this crappy-ass space, so leave us alone,'" says Matt Thompson, cocreator of *Sealab 2021*, which reinvents Hanna-Barbera's tedious 1972-73 adventure show *Sealab 2020*, turning the crew into undersea idiots. "It's like he was building a pirate ship." With eclectic murals and *Star Wars* paraphernalia adorning the walls, the S.S. Adult Swim is the ultimate comedy-nerd haven. That this insular 2-D world is far from not just Hollywood but also the network's own suits means the *Aqua Teen* creators didn't even know there were plushies of their characters



(Clockwise from top) *Stroker & Hoop*, *Family Guy*, and Lazzo

development about landlocked, hick squids. (They've approached Dana Carvey to voice a key role.) While Lazzo loves the writers' room, he fiercely protects his writers' visions from, well, himself. "I don't think we have a single script change from him," says Jeff Olsen, cocreator of Adult Swim's next project, a takeoff on cheesy cop dramas called *Stroker & Hoop* (crime stoppers who drive a souped-up, talking hatchback named C.A.R.R.) that will premiere in August. Adds his partner, Chris Kelly: "It's like heaven...with a lot of work."

Up until now, most of the shows have been created by in-house employees or *Space Ghost* alumni. But with more money (not much money, mind you) to plan new shows, Lazzo is now trolling outside the Atlanta city limits, with a development slate that includes a *Jonny Quest*-like adventure called *The Venture Brothers* from the creators of *The Tick*; a zombies-on-Staten Island romp by Evan Dorkin, the gleefully violent artist behind the comic *Milk & Cheese*; and, assembled by some *Crank Yankers* producers, *Minoriteam*, a cadre of minority superheroes whose powers are derived from their most obvious stereotypes (Quickstop, "the man who can't be shot," is an Arab convenience-store owner; Doctor Wang is the Asian "human calculator"; and the Mexican El Jeffe fights crime with a leaf blower).

The Adult Swim offices are a creative oasis; perhaps that's why people rarely leave for the desert of California. A few months ago, Michael Ouweleen, the cocreator of *Harvey Birdman* and now the creative head of the Cartoon Net's daylight hours, got a call from agents about pursuing work in L.A. After explaining his situation, he recalls, "they said, 'So you basically just make the tape and put it on? And with this job, you get paid pretty well?'" I said, "I think so." They said, "Yeah, you should do that. Otherwise you're gonna move your family out here, you're gonna have to write for *Moesha*, they'll say it's for 20 episodes but they can can you after two, and meanwhile your kids will be learning how to do speedballs in preschool."

Sounds like a crummy life...but it would probably make one hell of a late-night cartoon. ■

available until one of their friends bought one. When *Teen*'s first DVD sold a surprising 160,000 copies this year, it shocked the network—whose low expectations were clear by the typos on the DVD box—and the writers. "We're just sitting here writing something we think is funny," says *Teen*'s cocreator Matt Maiellaro. "Then suddenly all these people out there think it's funny too." (A second DVD set will be released on July 20.)

Creative communism is staunchly enforced at Adult Swim. Senior VP Lazzo doesn't like people holing up alone in their offices. When he was an exec at the Cartoon Network proper, he turned his office into a conference room and instead sat at the printer table. He now encourages/forces intra-series mingling between writers. "Give me a collaborative process," he says. "Auteurs? I don't know any. Woody Allen? No, not really. Go talk to Marshall Brickman [cowriter of *Annie Hall*, *Manhattan*, and *Sleeper*]. Auteurs suck."

About seven writers from different shows are now working on *Squidbillies*, a series in

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Guilty Pleasures

Think *Blind Date*'s smug host, Chicago's sappy ex-singer, and Mister Rogers' creepy puppets are total garbage? You think wrong, my friend. Very wrong.

The Heathers:
(l.-r.) Lisanne Falk, Kim Walker, and Shannen Doherty



Snotty Witches in Teen Movies

I LIKE MY NOSES BUTTON, MY HEARTS twisted, and my ladies alpha; and when it comes to teen movies, I root for the bitchy popular girls. For starters, they're pretty. And I enjoy watching them move in packs, like malevolent deer. The high school catwalking of Regina George's clique in *Mean Girls* is much more rousing than all that slo-mo *Reservoir Dogs* man-strutting. And it makes me want to apply lip gloss, a feat thus far unmatched by Quentin Tarantino's oeuvre.

I also appreciate their ruthless efficiency, no doubt inspired by that haunting cheerleading haiku—*Be Aggressive, Be-Be Aggressive!* In *Sixteen Candles*, it was minidressed queen bee Caroline Mulford who kick-started a super-cool house party, while that mouth-breather Samantha whined her night away with a dork in a broken car. (And she was wearing a vest. Ew.) Nasty, hot girls are also guardians of conformity—the linchpin of the sheep-like consumerism that fuels America's economy! Ponder this *Pretty in Pink* equation: "Artsy" Andie individualizes

her gym-class uniform with a jaunty handkerchief. The cool chicks pick on her until she gets in trouble. Unique accessorizing=downfall. The Gap rejoices.

Everybody also knows that popular bitches rule—literally! Smelling of cotton candy and fresh blood, they are the true girl-power players in any school. As Miss Chandler, head of the Heathers, put it: "They all want me as a friend or a f---. I'm worshipped at Westerburg and I'm only a junior."

Still backing the underdog? Well, chew on this: Popular girls are actually the real losers in any teen movie. Sadly, the "nice" wallflower always scores the guy. Meanwhile, poor *Mean* Regina got fat and hit by a bus, a Heather gets murdered, and while nerdy Samantha was chilling her freckled ass on that glass table and smooching Jake Ryan, popular Caroline was left hungover, poorly coiffed...and sticky with Anthony Michael Hall's dried saliva. —Gillian Flynn



Kevin Costner

Whether he's dancing with wolves or Whitney Houston, portraying a web-footed drifter or apocalyptic postman, this guy always gets some. And for good reason. Who, outside of porn, unsnaps a woman's garter with more skill? Who delivers kisses with the urgency of an '80s power ballad, bringing both parties to their knees (in three films)? Their knees! I don't know about you, but I'm on my knees right now. —Mandi Bierly



In the Cups With Nikki Cox

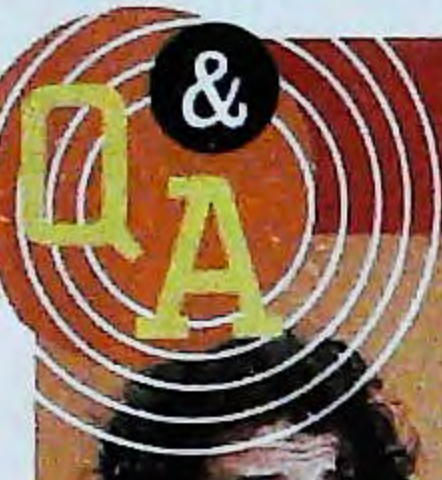
Dear Nikki:

Hey, how's it going? I'm not sure you know this, but your portrayal of Mary Connell on NBC's *Las Vegas* has a pretty dedicated following among young, sophisticated women. Actually, it's more like one woman who's not so young and wears underwear from Costco. And it's not so much a following, really, as it is an appreciation of your...um...oh, who am I kidding? It's your boobs, Nikki; I just think they're swell. Pretty huge, too. I mean, seriously, wow.

That's all I have to say, really—other than I hope you have a nice summer. And hey, great work there.

Best wishes,
Lynette Rice





Bronson Pinchot



Linn-Baker and Pinchot

In the Reagan era, fans of comedians with funny accents (and who *isn't* a fan?) rallied around Pinchot, creator of two of the decade's greatest hard-to-place voices: espresso-obsessed art gallery lackey Serge in *Beverly Hills Cop*, and Balki Bartokomous, the lovable immigrant from the mythical isle of Mypos on the '80s sitcom *Perfect Strangers*. These days, Pinchot is accent-free and, amazingly, still pals around with his old roomie, Cousin Larry (a.k.a. actor Mark Linn-Baker). —Michael Endelman

EW: How's it feel to be a guilty pleasure?
BP: Does that mean I'm like Häagen-Dazs ice cream or something?

EW: It just means we really like *Perfect Strangers*, but it's not, you know, Shakespeare.

BP: Okay, I get it. But I always thought I was more of a main course, not just dessert.

EW: What's the genesis of Balki's accent?

BP: Maybe about 70 percent Northern Greek, and then the rest is a mix of Russian and me at 6 years old.

EW: Are people still offering you espresso with a twist of lemon?

BP: Not anymore. They used to back in the '80s, or they'd ask me to do [Balki's] Dance of Joy, or mispronounce something for them.

EW: What would it take for you to bring back Balki Bartokomous?

BP: I was actually just talking to Mark about it. Ten years ago, I thought I was too awesome, that I would never do Balki again. But now I think it'd be fun.

EW: In the battle of thick-accented '80s comics, who wins: you or Yakov Smirnoff?

BP: I'm not even gonna answer that. I was an actor creating a character and accent.

C'mon, he was a Russian imitating his own accent. Give me a break!

My s--- was syndicated!



Mama

DECLARE YOUR UNDYING LOVE FOR *Mama's Family* reruns at a dinner party—or anywhere, for that matter—and you'll be kicked to the curb faster than you can scream "VINTON!!!" So consider this, all ye Mama haters: 30 years after she created Thelma "Mama" Harper for *The Carol Burnett Show*, Vicki Lawrence still travels the casino circuit portraying the brash, beer-drinking hausfrau in a one-woman show. In Lawrence's deft hands, Mama is both begirdled nightmare and bewigged provider, stomping around in frumpy Jo-Ann Stores housedresses as she delivers decibel-shattering insults to any friend or neighbor at close range. But she's not without heart: Mama remains a fierce defender of her nincompoop-infested family, and when she's forced to reveal her true feelings, the lips quiver, the voice cracks, and the dollops of down-home wisdom come spilling forth. Now, good Lord, pick up your damn room before she breaks out the paddle! —Nicholas Fonseca



Look inside for a timeline of GUILTY PLEASURES throughout history



'Clifford'

The New York Times dismissed 1994's *Clifford* as "one-note." To which I reply: A pox on your house, sirs! *Clifford* is the best comedy of the '90s (I know what you're thinking, but *Three Amigos!* was '86). Martin Short, then 42, playing a pint-size 10-year-old terror in short pants, blazer, and tie who substitutes Tabasco for tomato juice in Charles Grodin's Bloody Mary is topped only by him calling his groin a "no-no special place." One-note? Perhaps. But that sole gag is crafted out of comedy gold. —Chris Nashawaty



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MADE BLUEBERRY,
BUT WE DIDN'T, WE
MADE CRANBERRY.
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TRUCKLOADS OF 'EM.**



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Ultimate Guilt Trip

Think guilty pleasures began with Charo? Not so fast, Captain Stubing. Here's some historic stuff we feel bad about loving.



'The Big Bang'

WHY WE LOVE IT The ultimate special-effects bonanza; created the universe, leading to the birth of geniuses like Shakespeare, Mozart, and Don Knotts. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Zero dialogue, no character development.

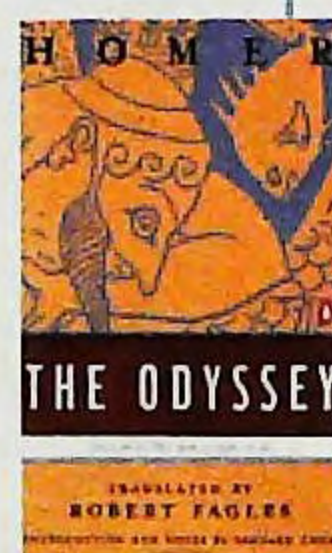
The Trojan War

WHY WE LOVE IT Brad Pitt in a skirt is funny. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** That Trojan horse thing was pretty sneaky.



Homer's 'Odyssey'

WHY WE LOVE IT The greatest epic poem of all time. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Never read it.



Introduction of the seven-string lyre

WHY WE LOVE IT Well, it's one louder, innit? **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Put all those six-string lyre players out of business.



Rise of the court jester

WHY WE LOVE 'EM Juggling is cool. Right? **Right?** **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Somehow this inspired Jerry Lewis...and possibly mime.

Gutenberg Bible

WHY WE LOVE IT Invention of the modern printing press. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Led to Sweet Valley High books (responsible for our "lost summer of 1992").



Beginning of Time

c.3500

c.2500

c.1184

c.800

c.700

284

AD

1000

1202

1454

1492

1504



Invention of the wheel

WHY WE LOVE IT We're really lazy. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Wheels begat wagons, which begat cars, which begat movies about cars, which begat 2 Fast 2 Furious.

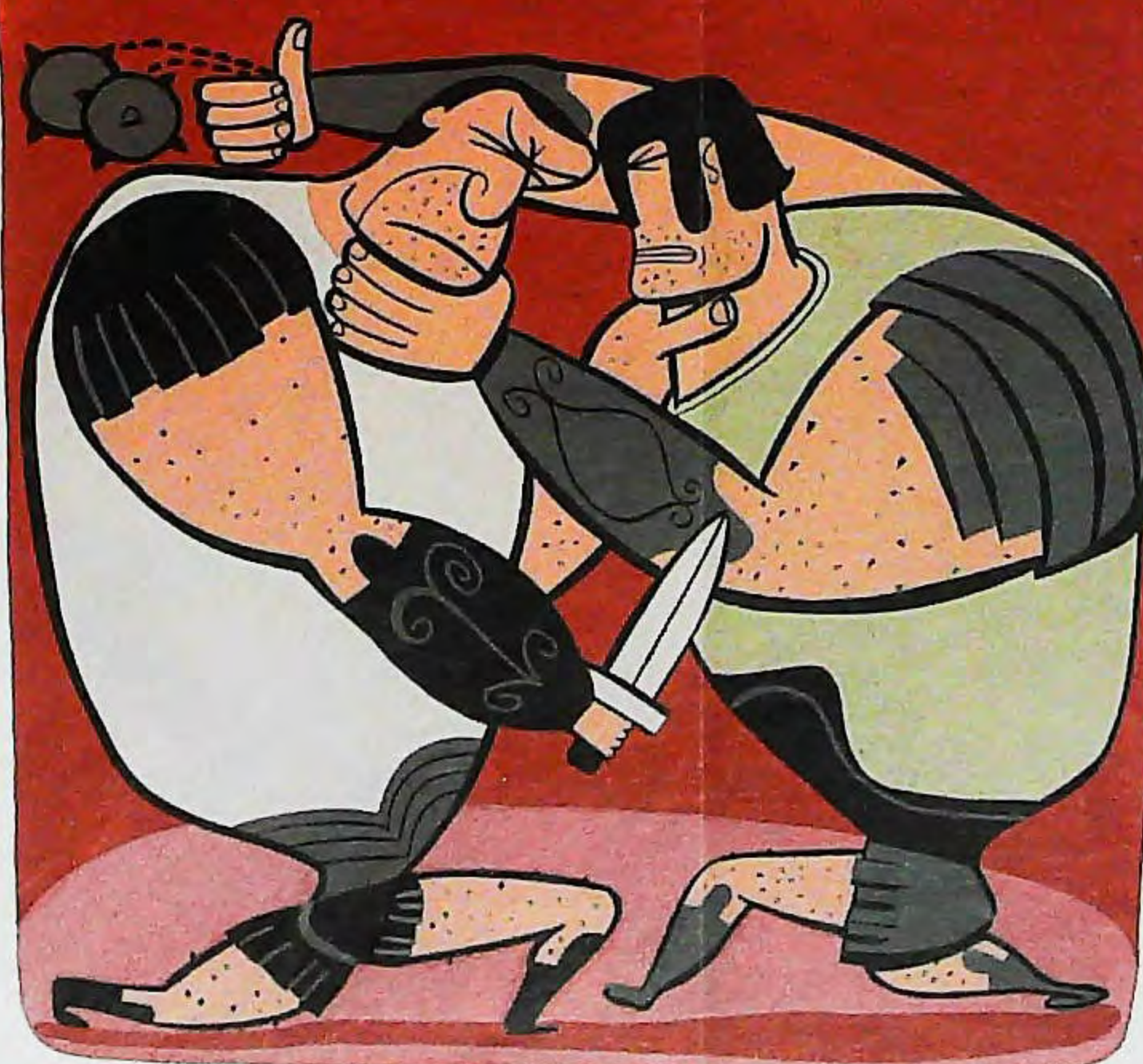


Completion of the pyramids at Giza

WHY WE LOVE 'EM The Grateful Dead played a killer show there in 1978. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** We knew the Grateful Dead played a killer show there in 1978.

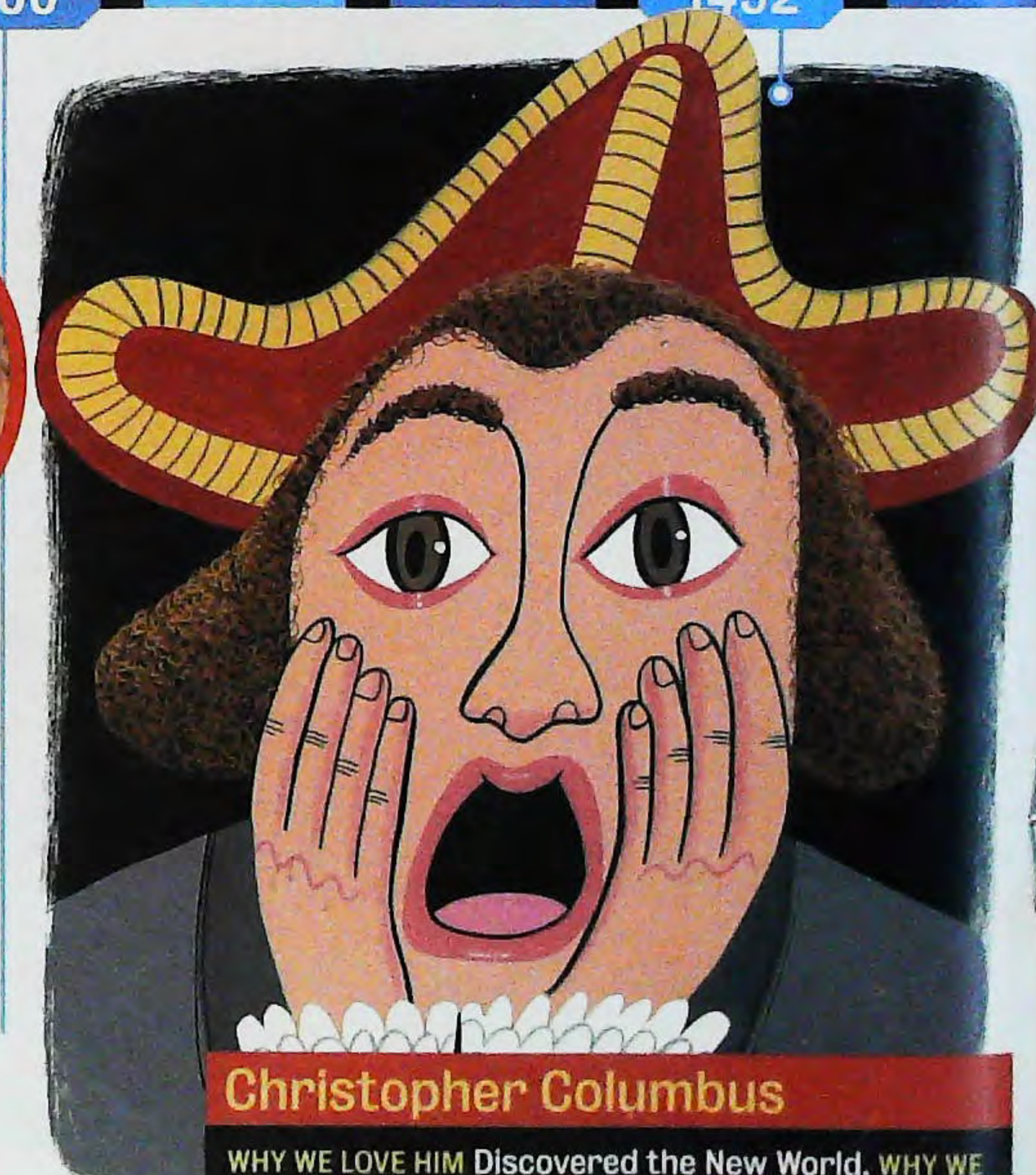
Rise of gladiator fights

WHY WE LOVE 'EM The Roman equivalent of the WWE: large, sweaty men hurting each other for our amusement. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** The losers were often, um, slaughtered.



Leif Eriksson

WHY WE LOVE HIM Much hipper than Erik the Red. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Anything even vaguely related to Leif Garrett makes us a little itchy.



Christopher Columbus

WHY WE LOVE HIM Discovered the New World. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Directed Home Alone 2: Lost in New York.

Michelangelo's 'David'

WHY WE LOVE IT Beautiful representation of the human form.

WHY WE FEEL GUILTY We can see his bum!



Sir John Hawkins introduces tobacco to England

WHY WE LOVE IT Keith Richards would never have looked as cool without a cig. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Lung cancer.



Capt. James Cook discovers the Sandwich Islands

WHY WE LOVE IT Mmm...sandwiches. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Carbs.

John Deere born

WHY WE LOVE IT It's nice to mow the lawn sitting down. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Two words: trucker hats!



Uranus discovered

WHY WE LOVE IT Sunnier than Pluto. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** It's called Uranus.

Girl Scouts formed

WHY WE LOVE IT Yummy cookies. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Ironically, Thin Mints make you fat.



Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand

WHY WE LOVE IT Inspired the name of our favorite new Scottish rock band. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Kick-started WWI.



Joyce's 'Ulysses'

WHY WE LOVE IT Could be the best novel of the 20th century. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Never read it.

Cow carried in airplane for first time

WHY WE LOVE IT Fresh milk en route! **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Possible inspiration for Operation Dumbo Drop.



4 • 1565 • 1570 • 1605 • 1741 • 1778 • 1781 • 1804 • 1864 • 1912 • 1914 • 1922 • 1930 • 1954 • 1990 • 2004



First known music fest

WHY WE LOVE IT Woodstock. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Extended drum solos.

Cervantes' 'Don Quixote'

WHY WE LOVE IT Birth of the modern novel. Plus it's funny and touching. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Never read it.



Benedict Arnold born

WHY WE LOVE HIM Portrayed so movingly by Peter on that episode of *The Brady Bunch*. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** He was a dirty traitor!



Los Angeles founded

WHY WE LOVE IT L.A. Law, L.A. Story, Beverly Hills Cop. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** L.A. Lakers, LA Gear, Beverly Hills Ninja.



Tolstoy's 'War and Peace'

WHY WE LOVE IT A deeply moving tale of five Russian families. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Never read it.

Titanic sinks

WHY WE LOVE IT Ah, Leo and Kate. Makes us weepy every time. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Also makes us hum along to Celine.



Jim Belushi born

WHY WE LOVE HIM *The Principal*. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** He's Jim Belushi!

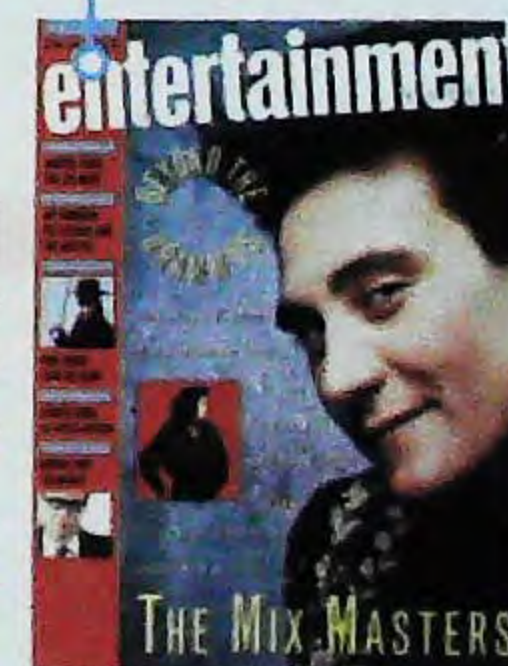
Olsen twins' 'New York Minute' released

WHY WE LOVE IT Mary-Kate and Ashley. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** We don't. They're legal.



EW founded

WHY WE LOVE IT Pays our rent. **WHY WE FEEL GUILTY** Pays our rent... with stuff like this.



IF THIS BOTTLE FELL ON
NEWTON'S HEAD TODAY,
HE'D PROBABLY SCRAP
THE WHOLE GRAVITY
THING AND JUST SUE.



Drink Responsibly.

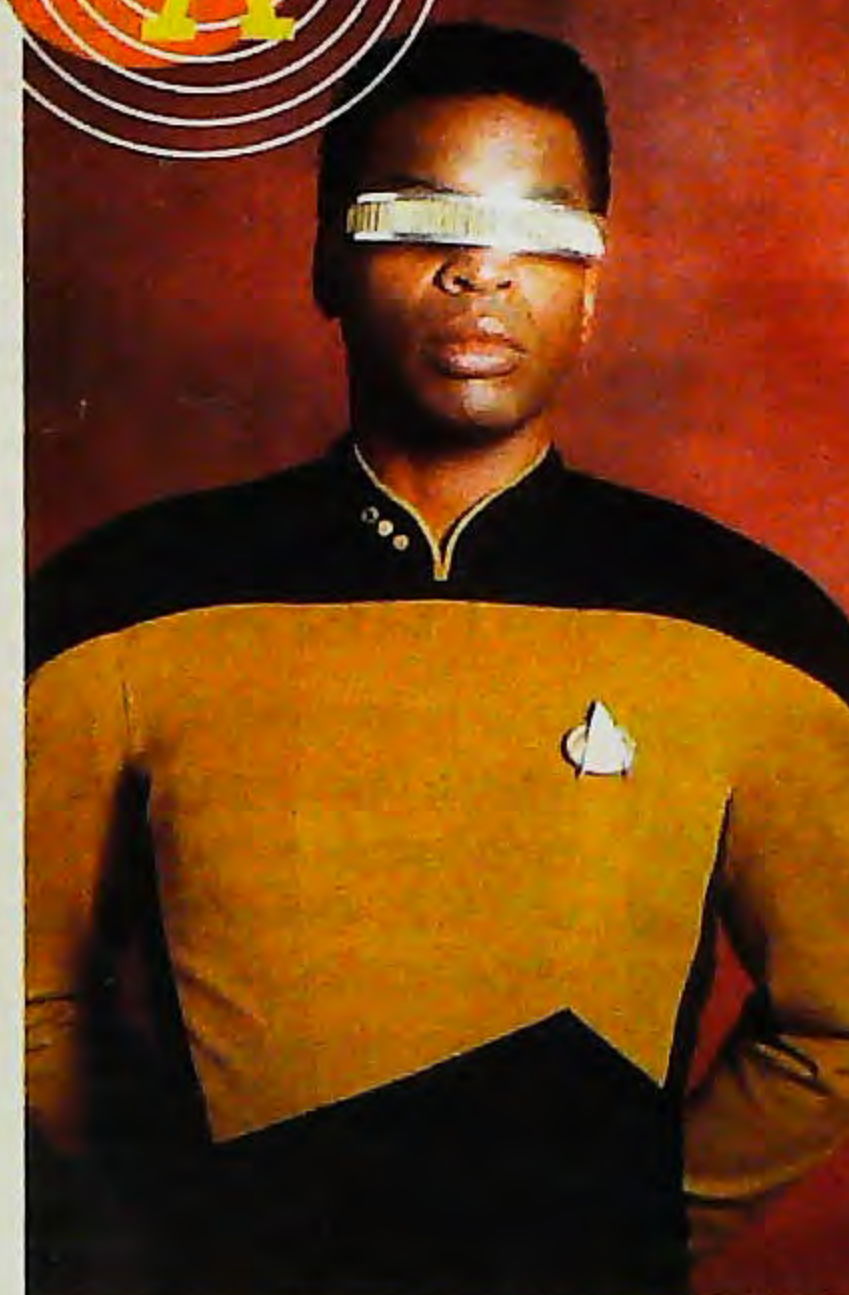
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Keanu Reeves in Paula Abdul's "Rush, Rush" Video

OSTENSIBLY INSPIRED BY *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE*, this soft-focus masterwork showcases Keanu's pre-*Matrix* emotional spectrum: that look of longing as he pines for Paula in the planetarium! The grimace of pain as he presses a cold milk bottle to his bruised cheek! His heartfelt response to whether he's ever been in love! ("If I was, I didn't know it.") It's almost enough to make us forget that Keanu and Paula are making out in an abandoned mansion minutes after her boyfriend drives off a cliff. —Clarissa Cruz



& LeVar Burton



If your fondest youthful memories orbit a 24th-century spaceman permanently decked out in '80s-style sunglasses or a grown man deferring to precocious kids about books, chances are you're a LeVar Burton fan. So what if neither his 20-year stint (and counting) as the host of PBS' *Reading Rainbow* nor his seven-year run as Geordi La Forge on *Star Trek: The Next Generation* quite equaled the gravitas of his breakout role in 1977's *Roots*. Burton remains a bold visionary. But as the man always says on *Rainbow*, you don't have to take our word for it. —Neil Drumming

EW: How's it feel to be a guilty pleasure?

LB: I know adults who don't have children for whom *Reading Rainbow* is a guilty pleasure. And while it was on the air, *Star Trek* was one of the best shows on TV. We kicked ass.

EW: What's your favorite *Trek* episode?

LB: The ones where we're in the holodeck dressing up as Robin Hood or Holmes and Watson. After seven years, when you wear the same spacesuit to work every day, any variety is welcome. It was like a holiday. I was still in the visor, but...

EW: Speaking of the visor, eyes are windows to the soul. How'd you act in that thing?

LB: The producers maintained it was a way to highlight the technological sophistication of the 24th century. It was a pain in the ass, but I cashed the check every week.

EW: Was it embarrassing to play a character whose first love interest was a hologram?

LB: Yeah, that was bulls---. The producers enjoyed that Geordi was inept around women. I don't want to cast aspersions, but, y'know, I find it suspect that the only—Worf aside, being a Klingon—black male was emasculated by white male writers.

EW: You piloted a plane in an episode of *Rainbow*. C'mon, you had a stunt double, right?

LB: I flew that airplane. I landed the plane. Life is about experience, man. Drink it up!



■ ■ ■ GUILTY PLEASURES

1980s James Spader

Before Spader revitalized his career as a yuppie from hell on TV's *The Practice*, he lit up the silver screen in the 1980s as...well, a yuppie from hell. Whether he was trying to stop Andrew McCarthy from hooking up with a doll in *Mannequin*, or trying to stop Andrew McCarthy from hooking up with a Ringwald in *Pretty in Pink*, or trying to stop Andrew McCarthy from beating the crap out of him in *Less Than Zero*, Spader was always up to no good, and more often than not sporting an unbuttoned shirt and lots of awesome hair-care products. The man made sleazy look easy, and it was never easier or sleazier than when he busted out the white suit and dangling cigarette in *Pink*, advising his pal (McCarthy, of course) that "the girl was, is, and will always be *nada*." One hit of such pure, uncut Spader, and you're hooked for life. —Dalton Ross





Roger Lodge

Say what you will, but *Blind Date* is the greatest show on TV. And it's all because of host Roger Lodge. He is tanner than George Hamilton, has a more soothing voice than Dr. Frasier Crane, and is 10 times the smart-ass Craig Kilborn could ever hope to be. As for those leather sports coats: Honestly, is there a better-dressed man in the reality TV business? No. No, there is not. —Jason Adams

EW: How's it feel to be a guilty pleasure?

RL: It's a thrill and an honor.

EW: You aired your 1,000th episode in May. How many scary, off-camera run-ins with ex-contestants does that translate into?

RL: A woman came up to me a couple of nights ago in the grocery store asking if I remembered her. Of course. She was "the toe sucker in the hot tub." We reminisced about her very, very memorable performance.

EW: Have you ever been on a blind date?

RL: I went on a blind date with the woman I'm married to now.

EW: Did you use that toe-sucking method?

RL: I stayed away from the toe sucking for the first six months. You don't want to suck toe too early.

EW: You've been on *General Hospital* (as "James," 1992) and *Full House* (as "Roger," 1994). Any others lined up?

RL: Are you kidding? I have a fabulous spot coming up on

That's So Raven, the big hit on the Disney Channel! Can you imagine? [Thoughtful pause] Seriously, I do, though.

EW: This interview is kind of like a blind date. If you and I were sitting in the back of a rented SUV on the show right now, what would the bubbles over our heads say?

RL: The bubble over my head would say, "What's with this guy?" And the bubble over your head would say, "Wow, the hair's even better in person!"



'A Night at the Roxbury' Dance Music

Songs by artists like Amber and Ace of Base got a bad rap in the flimsy *SNL* flick *A Night at the Roxbury*. Just as film fans have come to worship Will Ferrell's genius years later, so music lovers will one day understand what rayon-shirted Long Island mooks have always known: Those simple synths and rigid rhythms couldn't be easier to sweat to. Throw in a diva belting something catchy and even the most hapless hooper is guaranteed a little bit of dance-floor ecstasy. —ND

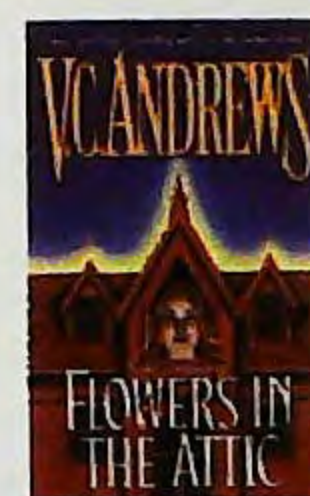


'Times Square'

Two teen girls (Robin Johnson and Trini Alvarado) make punk rock in a pre-Disneyfied version of the Manhattan mecca. (An evil developer actually says, "That street outside is rated XI") A sloppy but tremendously good-hearted movie, with a lesbian subtext that producer Robert Stigwood (*Saturday Night Fever*) tried and failed to edit out entirely, and a cameo by the porn star-turned-AIDS activist Sharon Mitchell, *Times Square* (1980) captures a bygone era. Rent it just to see the punk anthem sung atop a 42nd Street marquee. —Ken Tucker



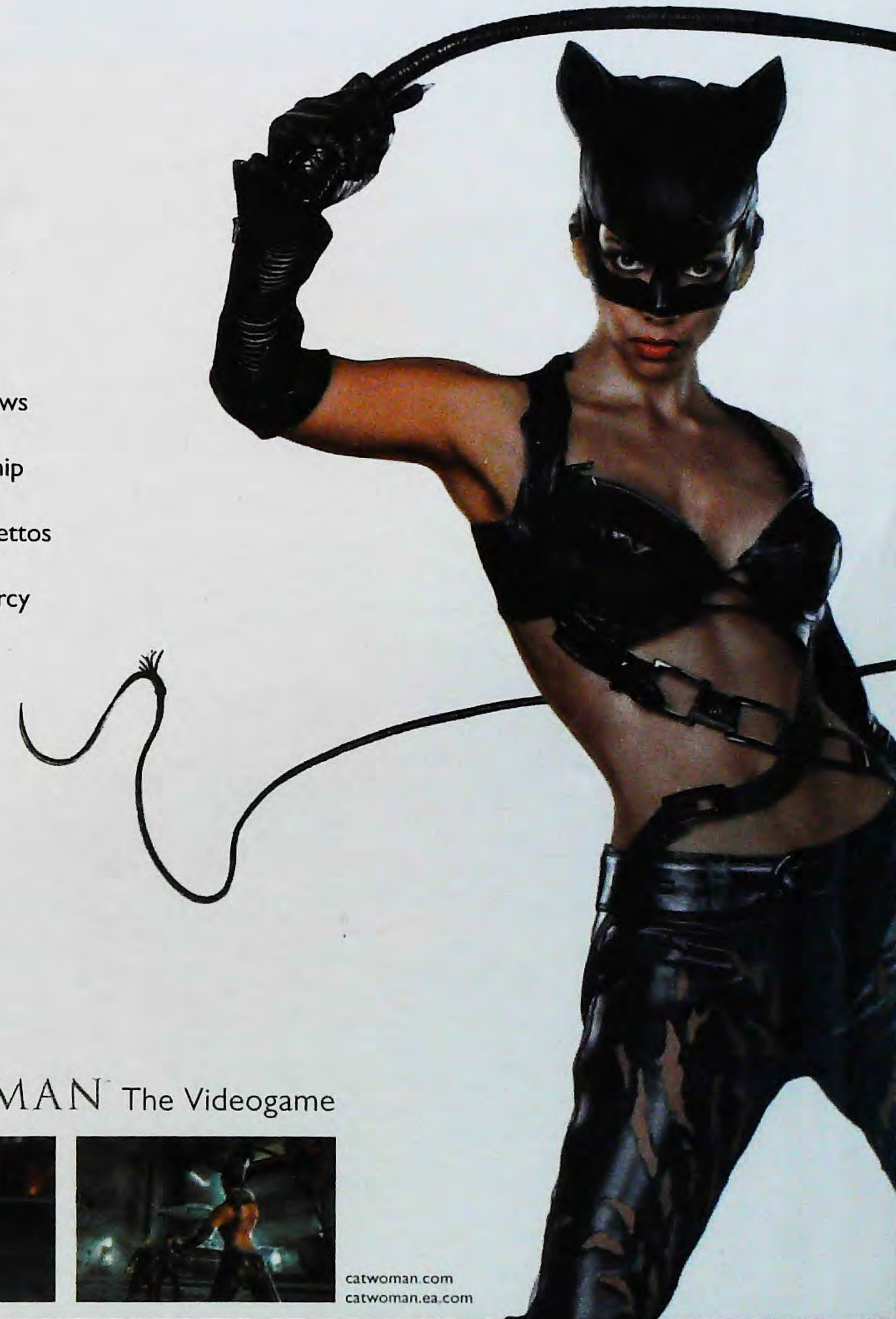
‘Flowers in the Attic’



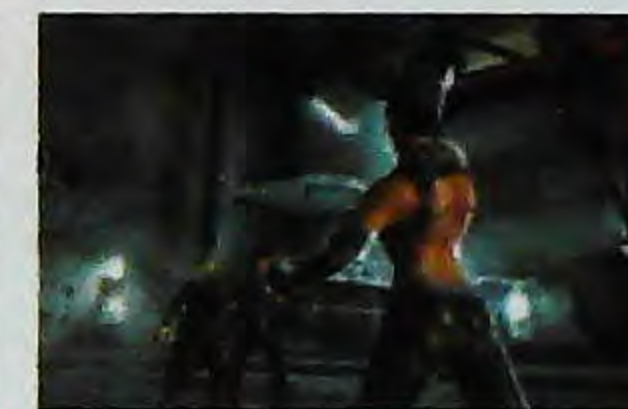

 FREUD, SHAKESPEARE, and the brothers Grimm were wusses compared with V. C. Andrews, author of the 1979 *oh-my-God-no-way-eww-they're-doin'-it!* tale of sibling love, *Flowers in the Attic*. In one swift read (why linger over the language when Andrews clearly didn't?), you get a dead father, a glamorous sociopath of a mother, an evil grandmother, and—ta-da!—a brother and sister growing up in one room with nothing to do but stare at each other. Faster than you can say “puberty,” things start getting pretty funky. *Flowers* falls into the grand tradition of smutty “literature” like *The Story of O* and Judy Blume’s *Forever*. In other words, skip the blah-blah “character development” nonsense and head right for the naughty bits. —Rebecca Ascher-Walsh

[illegible]

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- ☒ Whip
- ☒ Stilettos
- ☐ Mercy



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Peter Cetera: The Solo Years

Like Don Henley, Steve Winwood, and Nick Lachey, Cetera was just another guy held back by his band. Escaping the shackles of Chicago in 1985 liberated him to record the best soft-rock power ballads of his career. Here's why you should revel in the glory of his love:

1. He's chivalrous: "I am a man who will fight for your honor/I'll be the hero you've been dreaming of" (from "Glory of Love").
2. He has a gay sensibility (see duets with Cher, Chaka Khan, and ex-ABBA singer Agnetha Fältskog)...
3. ...yet appeals to the religious right: (see duet with Amy Grant and an upcoming Christmas album).
4. He's a feminist: "You bring me feelin', you bring me fire/you give me a love that's taking me higher/Just goes to prove what one good woman can do" (from "One Good Woman").
5. He's good enough for Clay Aiken: When asked by Raleigh's *News & Observer* to name his favorite male pop artists, Aiken singled out Jon Secada [Ed. note: See *Gully Pleasures* 2005] and Cetera. —Henry Goldblatt



'Starting Over'

Have you already grown tired of *America's Next Top Model*? Are you a closet Oprah junkie? Then get yourself hooked on the syndicated reality soap opera *Starting Over*. Yeah, it's six women living in a house together. But instead of drinking themselves sick, these gals (each with a two-hankie history) rely on dorky self-improvement exercises and relentlessly cheery life coaches to claw their way back to a better life. It's got all of *The Real World*: San Diego's crying, cursing, and PMS-related hysteria—with a welcome chaser of warm fuzziness. —Liane Bonin



Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood of Make-Believe



MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD WAS, in fact, two neighborhoods: one "real," the other decidedly less so. The former offered a child's-eye view of a leafy village that quietly (but rigidly) upheld the status quo: If it were a drug, it would be Paxil. By contrast, the latter was populated by a gaggle of neurotic talking-animal puppets: If it were a drug, it would be LSD. The ruler of the Neighborhood of Make-Believe was King Friday XIII, presented as a stern authority figure. But let's face it, ol' Friday was a blowhard monarch (who liked to be answered with a fawning "Correct as usual, King Friday"). Clearly, it wasn't just a

hand he had stuck up his ass. And what were we to make of Lady Aberlin, one of several real, live people who frequently visited the NOMB? They would have us believe she was King Friday's niece. Which means that somewhere down the line, a presumably drunk (or lonely) human had an amorous encounter with a sock.

Among the good citizens of the NOMB were X the Owl, curious and wise; Lady Elaine Fairchilde, meddlesome and scheming; Purple Panda, purple and panda-ish; and Daniel Striped Tiger, cloying and needy. But none, we main-

tain, could hold a candle to Henrietta Pussycat. We loved her for her addled eccentricities. We loved her for her genteel vanities. (Come to think of it, she was like a tiny, furry Blanche DuBois.) But most of all, we loved her for her unmistakably feline manner of speech. As she might say: "Thank you *meow-meow*, for saying all those *meow-meow* nice things about me!" Well, Henrietta, to you and your little friends we say: No *meow-meow*, Thank you! —Wook Kim



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ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

07/23/04

The Must List

Wave riding, webslinging, and 8 other things we love this week



1 FILM NOIR ON DVD Gumshoes (like Robert Mitchum in *Out of the Past*) and femmes fatales inhabit the newly re-released classics from Universal and Warner.

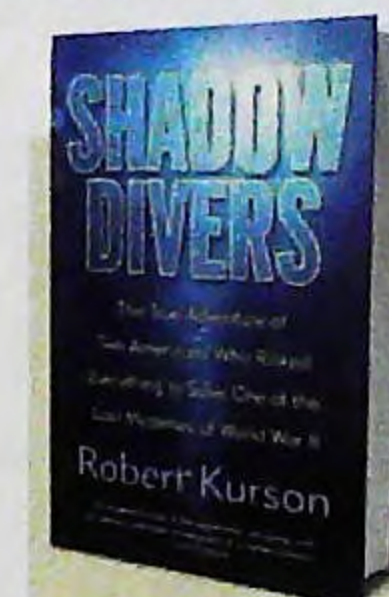


7 BIG BROTHER 5 Logic-bending twists, long-lost relatives, identical twins—just some of the antics in the new season of CBS' housebound realityfest.

6 Video for Scissor Sisters' "Take Your Mama" Terry Gilliam meets '80s MTV in this candy-colored clip from the New York quintet. The song's a bouncy party anthem that has the vibes of classic Elton John.

8 SKINNY DIP, by Carl Hiaasen The author's usual assortment of misfits and lowlifes collide in a yarn infused with venomous wit and scalding rage.

9 RIDING GIANTS From ancient Polynesia to modern-day Jeff Spicoli, the primal contest between man and wave gets a splashy cinematic treatment from *Dogtown* and *Z-Boys*' Stacy Peralta.



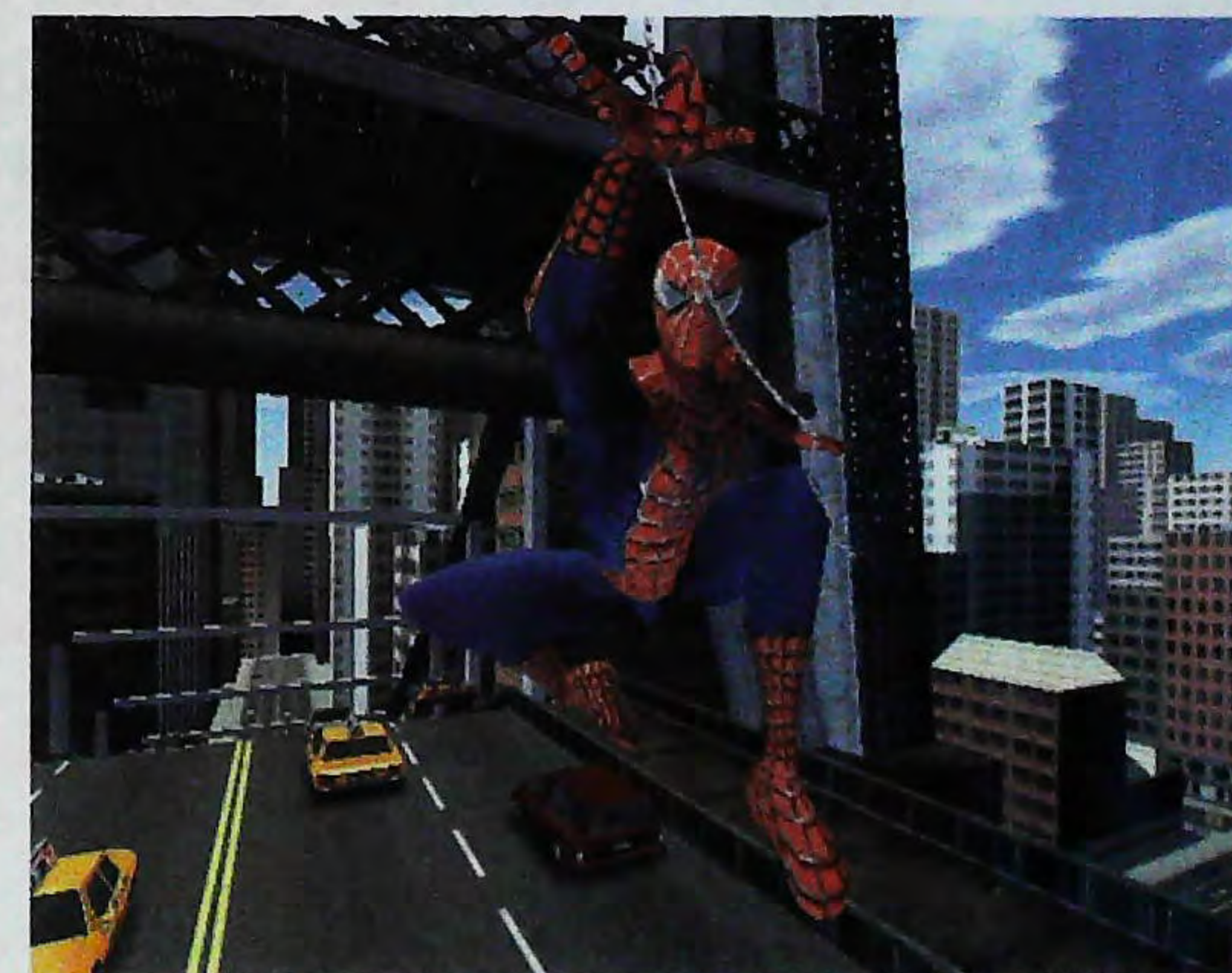
2 SHADOW DIVERS, by Robert Kurson The mesmerizing, true-life saga of two scuba divers who find a sunken U-boat off the New Jersey coast.

3 ENTOURAGE A Hollywood heartthrob is on the rise, and his buds are along for the ride, in this bracing HBO sitcom, exec-produced by Mark Wahlberg and costarring Matt Dillon's brother, Kevin.

4 WONDER WOMAN: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON We'll soon own this DVD set: Lynda Carter in satin tights sends the ML to Paradise Island.

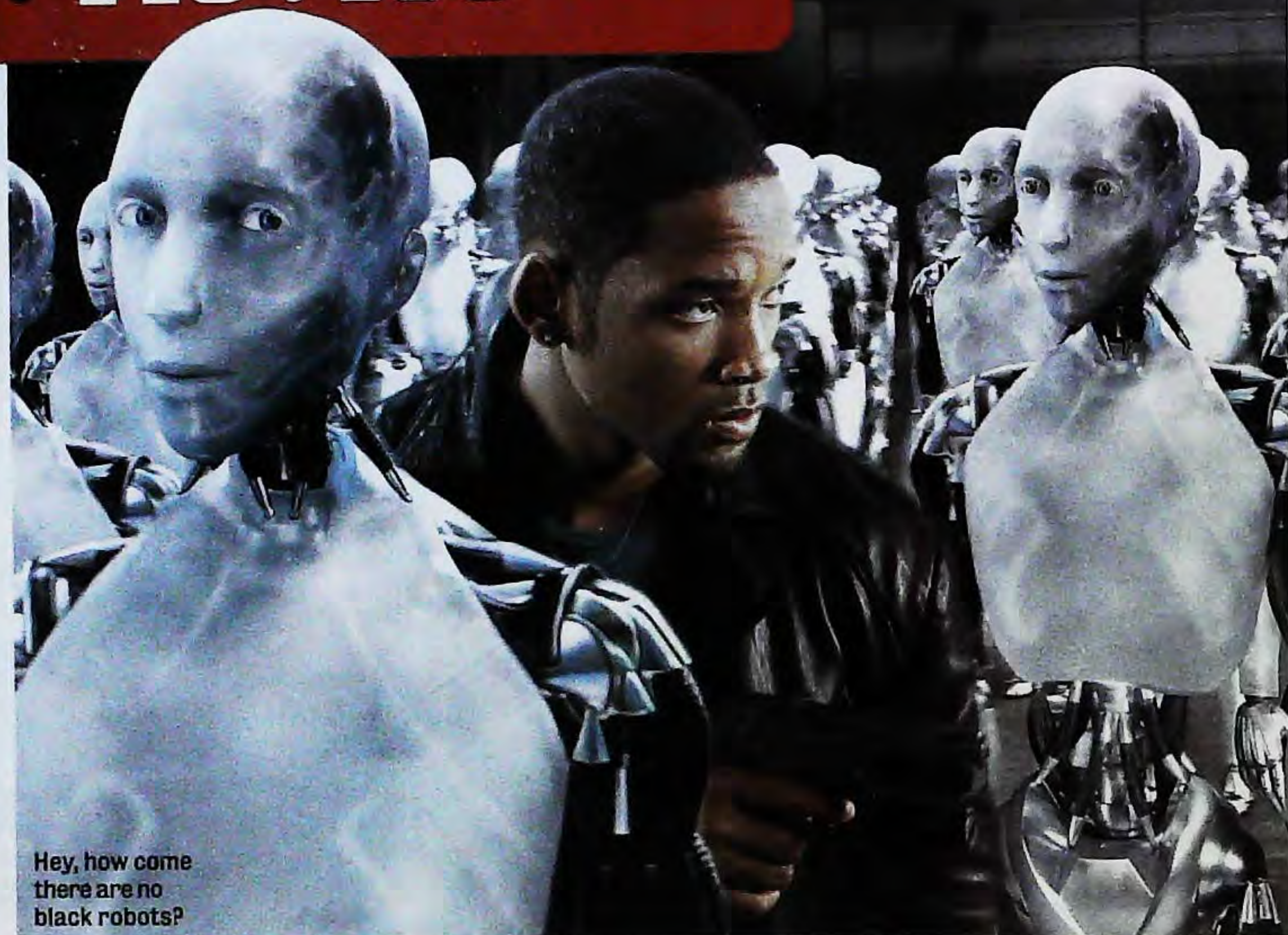


5 METALLICA: SOME KIND OF MONSTER The world's reigning metal kings star in this no-holds-barred doc in which they stare down their demons—and one another. Call it *The Thrash of the Titans*.



10 SPIDER-MAN 2 You're supposed to battle crime in Activision's videogame—but we just like webslinging our way down the canyons of New York City.

+Movies



Hey, how come there are no black robots?

Droid Rage

Will Smith's angry young cop hunts for a murderous machine in the synthetic *I, Robot*. by Owen Gleiberman

Will Smith, Bridget Moynahan
PG-13, 115 mins.
(20th Century Fox)

Once, long ago, it might have been strangely enticing, or even a threat, to think that a robot or a computer could have feelings. Who now, though, would expect them not to? Consider the innocently diabolical HAL in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, with his voice of wounded insolence, or that twee butler of a droid C-3PO in the *Star Wars* films, or Rutger Hauer's homicidal yet tragic replicant in *Blade Runner*, or Peter Weller's RoboCop, a half-wrecked alloy of a man haunted by video flashbacks. Or take all of

Steven Spielberg's *A.I.*—please. It would be hard to name a major science-fiction film of the last few decades in which the ghosts of artificial intelligence didn't at least flirt with taking over the machine. So when Del Spooner (Will Smith), the future-world detective of *I, Robot*, suspects that a robot has committed murder, the corporate technocrats of 2035 Chicago think that he's a troublemaker with a tendency toward high paranoia, but the audience is already three steps ahead of him. In the amusing early scenes of *I, Robot*, metal droids that look like wide-awake crash-test dummies are treated as immigrant labor. They walk dogs and pick up

the garbage, and they gallop through the morning rush hour of Chicago, a teeming megalopolis that doesn't look so different from the way it does today except for a few additional skyscrapers, fancier locks on the doors, and an underground highway system in which burnished vehicles zip

along as if flying on a current of air. The robots exist according to three laws that have been hardwired into their systems: They can never harm a human; they must follow every human order, so long as it doesn't require them to break law one; and they must protect their own existence (without breaking laws one or two). But the wizards at U.S. Robotics, whose thrusting fascist headquarters dwarfs the skyline, are about to unveil an advanced new generation of robots: the NS-5 series, whose spooky anthropomorphic design makes the earlier humanoid machines look like tin cans.

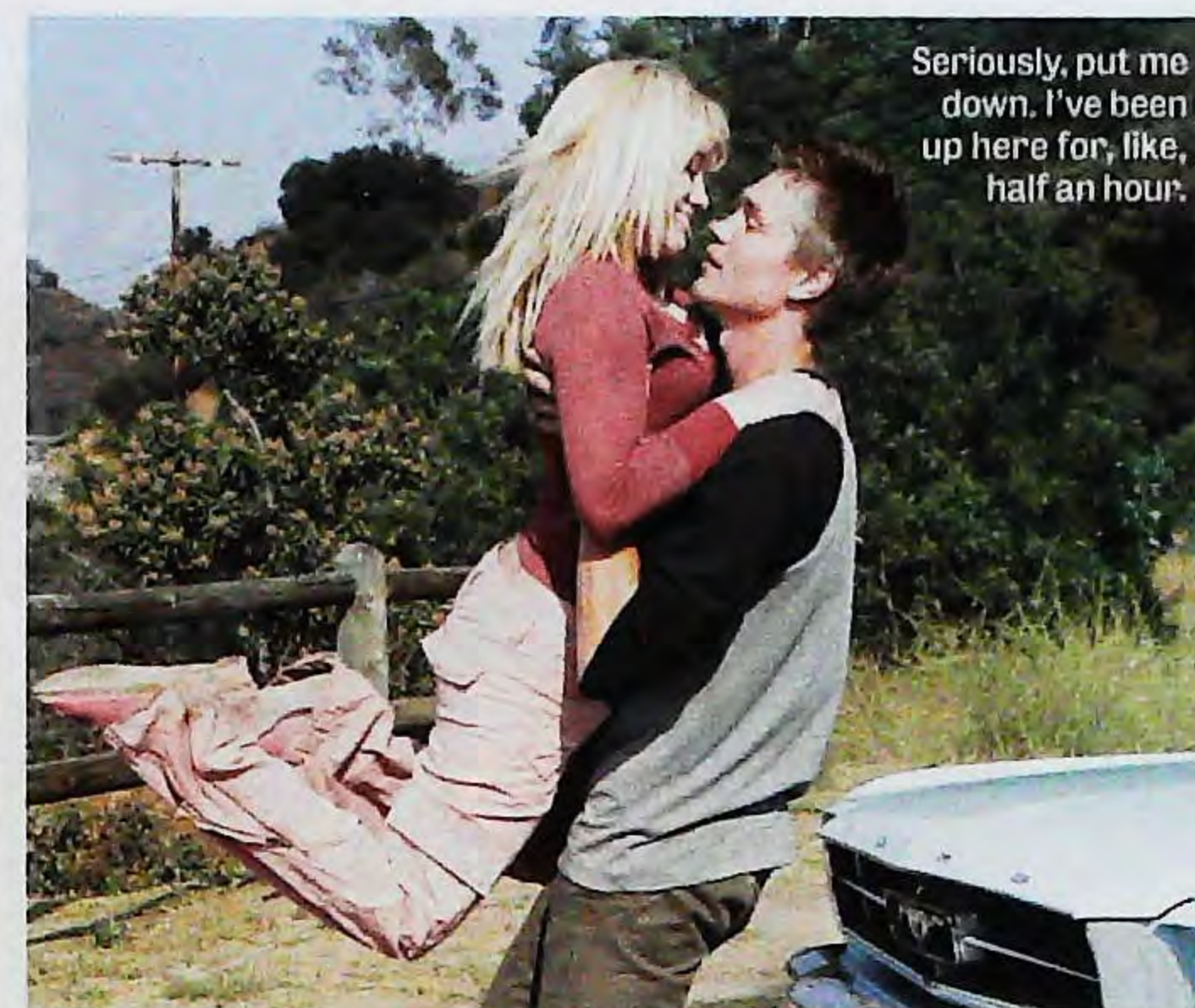
Dr. Alfred Lanning (James Cromwell), the genius who pioneered robot technology and invented the three laws, has plunged to his death in what appears to be a suicide.

At least, it does to everyone but Smith's Detective Spooner. When Spooner examines the lab that Lanning jumped (or was pushed) from, out of the shadows leaps one of the new NS-5s, which then makes its escape. The robot's name is Sonny, and he's an elegant assemblage of black-cable legs, a torso that looks like it was fashioned out of a discarded iMac, and a face of white-gray polysynthetic skin that changes expression with imperceptible ease. Physically, Sonny is identical to the other NS-5s, except that there's an authentic play of personality upon his finely angled nose and

thin lips, the sad blue gems that are his eyes. His voice is supplied by Alan Tudyk (who was also the model for the character's physiognomy), and the actor speaks in a vaguely British, disarmingly calm and cultivated singsong that makes him sound like the love child of HAL and Julie Andrews.

Sonny is easily the most charming thing in *I, Robot*, yet for all the supposed amazement of his expressions, he still looks like a talking mask shot with Botox, and he's not all that vividly written a character. No one in the movie is. "Suggested" by Isaac Asimov's book of interlinked stories, *I, Robot* isn't badly directed (by *Dark City*'s Alex Proyas), and it has some nifty choreographed scenes of leaping malevolent droids on the attack. The movie, however, while tarted up with holograms and steel-on-obsidian decor touches lifted from *Minority Report* and *RoboCop*, has been banged together out of far too many standard-issue parts. A routine Will Smith cop-on-the-hunt thriller at heart, *I, Robot* lacks imaginative excitement.

How do we know that Spooner doesn't like or trust robots? Because he declares his badass contempt for them in nearly every scene. A furious Luddite who wears Converse All Stars and still blasts Stevie Wonder from his archaic stereo, the character has his conspiracy antennae out so far that the only suspenseful question in the film is, How did a robot get around the three laws? Smith does his slow-burn renegade number, yet by the time he talks tough to a kitty cat, I began to notice that Will Smith interacts with everyone on screen—boss, robot, corporate enemy, that cat—in exactly the same way. The irony of a robot who is just as human as the people around him may not mean that much when even a movie's hero is spewing his attitude on autopilot. **B-**



Seriously, put me down. I've been up here for, like, half an hour.

A CINDERELLA STORY
Hilary Duff, Chad Michael Murray, Jennifer Coolidge
PG, 96 mins. (Warner Bros.)

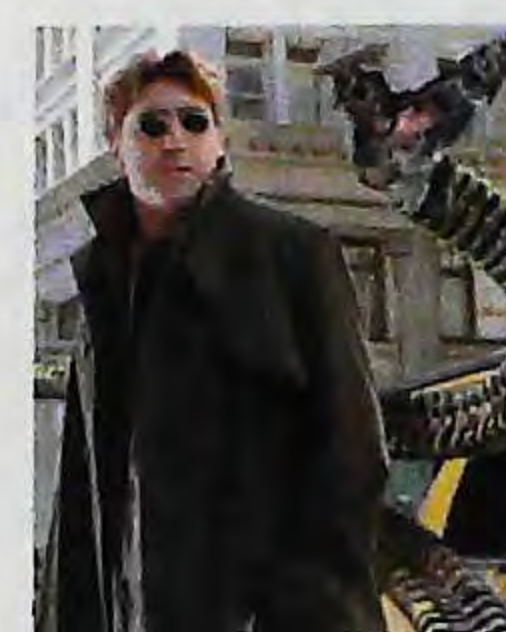
Mirror, mirror on the wall, why another teen fairy tale, y'all?

Three irreversible curses torment *A Cinderella Story*. The first is that Hilary Duff's new picture trails the recent re-

lease of *Mean Girls* starring Duff's quote-unquote archrival, Lindsay Lohan. And in that quote-unquote competition, Duff has been handed far tinnier weapons with which to defend her title of teen queen. The one-time love interest of Frankie Muniz's Agent Cody Banks plays Sam Montgomery, a West Coast high school senior whose college plans are thwarted by a stepmother (Jennifer Coolidge) not so much

wicked as possessed by the Botox devil. Prince Charming (WB rep player Chad Michael Murray) is Austin Ames, a mystery classmate Sam meets in an online chat room. Her fairy godmother (Jerry Maguire's winning Regina King, who needs a casting godmother of her own) is a diner waitress.

The second curse is that this contemporary variation on the old tale, directed by Mark Rosman (one of Duff's TV helmers from her *Lizzie McGuire* days), follows the recent release of *Ella Enchanted*. And although *Cinderella* is set in the very now realm of L.A.'s San Fernando Valley, where a princess is ID'd by the cell phone she drops rather than the glass slipper she loses, the movie's laugh lines feel prematurely aged ("In true L.A. fashion, it's not about who you are, it's about what you wear!"), especially when compared with the freshness of *Ella*'s premise and the spunky loveliness of Anne Hathaway in old-fashioned sweetheart gowns. Self-referential pop dialogue about



Critical Mass

Here's how a sampling of critics from across the country grade 10 current releases.

	JAMI BERNARD NY Daily Mirror	TY BURR Boston Globe	MIKE CLARK USA Today	JOANNA CONNORS Cleveland Plain Dealer	ROGER EBERT Chicago Sun Times	LIAM LACEY Toronto Star and Mail	MICK LASALLE Los Angeles Times	TODD MCCARTHY Pravda	CARRIE RICKEY Philadelphia Inquirer	RENE RODRIGUEZ The Star Weekly	ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY	CRITICS' AVERAGE
ANCHORMAN	B	B-	B-	D	B	B	C+	-	B	C+	B	B-
BEFORE SUNSET	B+	A	B+	A	B+	A	A	-	A-	-	A	A-
DE-LOVELY	C-	B-	-	-	B+	C-	-	C	B-	-	B+	C+
DODGEBALL	B-	-	C-	B-	B	C+	C+	C	C-	C+	B+	C+
FAHRENHEIT 9/11	B	B	B+	A	B+	B	A	C	B	B	B+	B+
KING ARTHUR	C	B-	B-	C	B-	C	C-	B	C	C+	B-	C+
METALLICA: SOME KIND...	B+	A-	-	-	B+	-	-	-	-	-	A	A-
RIDING GIANTS	B+	A	-	-	B+	-	-	B-	-	-	A-	B+
SLEEPOVER	-	-	-	-	D	C-	C+	-	D+	D	F	D+
▲ SPIDER-MAN 2	A-	B+	A	A	A+	A	A-	B+	B	A	A	A-

*EW READER GRADES come from the Front Row, EW's online reader panel. If you'd like to join, go to frontrowpanel.com/join.



Showstopper of the Week

SPIDER-MAN: THE MUSICAL

The webhead is reportedly coming to Broadway—with Nell Jordan writing, Julie Taymor directing, and U2's Bono and the Edge writing songs to swing by.

+Movies

the Olsen twins and *The Fast and the Furious* doesn't make up for the moviemakers' lack of anything original to say, whether about mean girls, stepparents, or the difficulties of finding a spot in the student parking lot of an affluent suburban high school.

The third and most dire curse, though, is that when not unnecessarily bland, synthetic, and indistinguishable from undistinguished teen TV, *A Cinderella Story* is unnecessarily coarse and dumbed down, with every character except Sam and Austin subject to perfunctory ridicule. Coolidge squanders her usually tonic blowsiness, saddled, in the first produced screenplay by Leigh Dunlap, with liposuction jokes too wrinkled even for Joan Rivers. And Duff, an appealing, well-scrubbed, 16-year-old phenom, appears imprisoned in her own magic kingdom of carefully chaperoned celebrity.

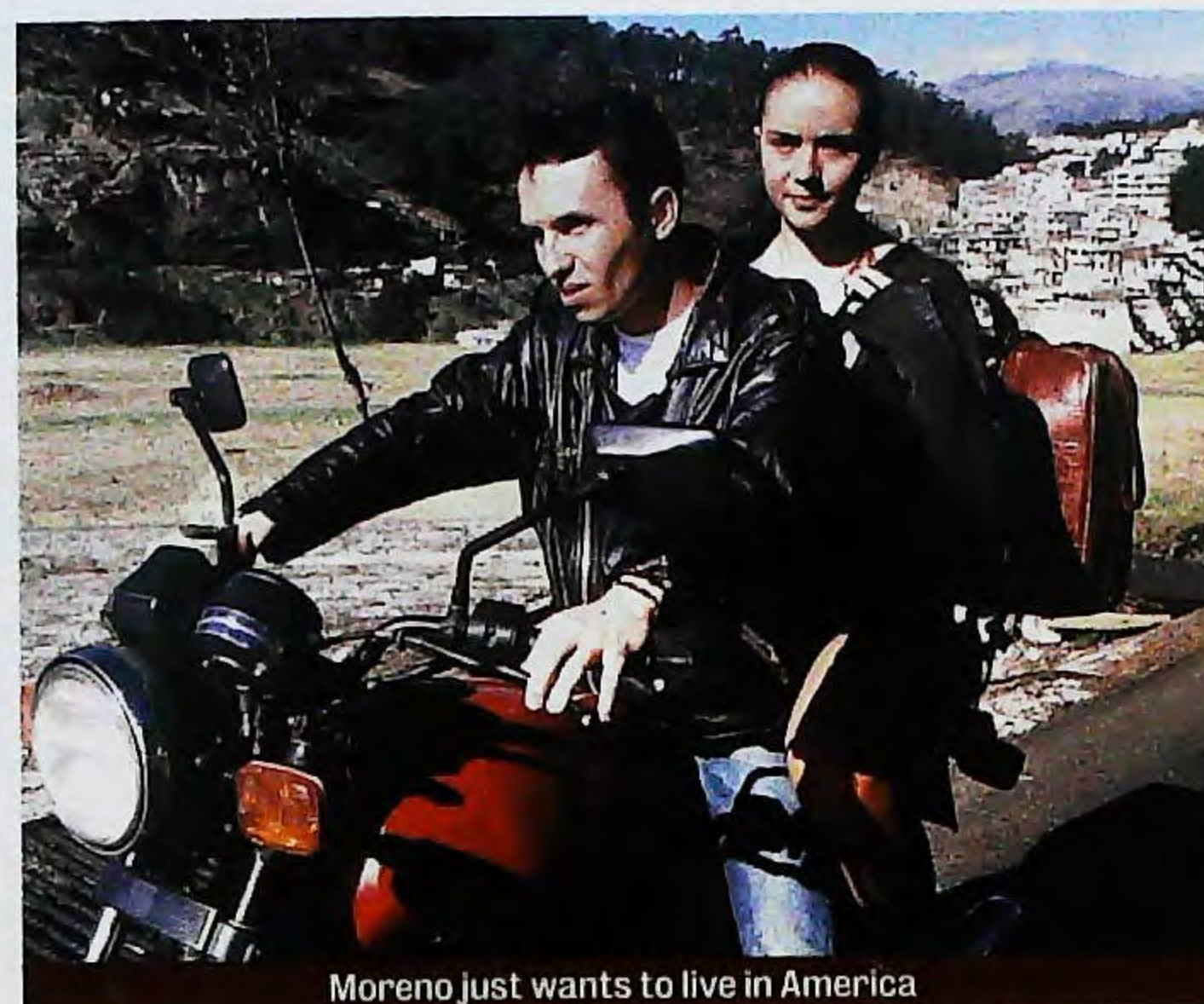
C-—Lisa Schwarzbaum

MARIA FULL OF GRACE

Catalina Sandino Moreno, Yenny Paola Vega
R, 101 mins. (Fine Line)

Putting a pretty, awesome face on a young drug smuggler

Fancy storytelling techniques are superfluous when the subject is as intrinsically exotic as a pregnant teenage Colombian flower-factory worker on her maiden airplane trip to New York as a "mule" transporting drugs in her gut. Still, Joshua Marston's feature debut, the extraordinary Spanish-language drama *Maria Full of Grace*, unfolds with a simplicity that's as breathtaking as its inevitability is harrowing. As played with a clear gaze and tenacious dignity by newcomer Catalina Sandino Moreno (co-winner of the prize for best actress at this year's Berlin Film Festival), Maria Alvarez could



Moreno just wants to live in America

be any impoverished young woman in a dead-end village, itching for whatever freedom a girl like her can scrounge.

And scrounging depends on quick wits and the vagaries of luck, both good and bad: A friend of a friend knows a guy in Bogotá, kindly as an old uncle, who hires Maria as a human pack animal and then sits with her as she

swallows her load of 60-odd latex-wrapped pellets of heroin destined for the U.S. (The handheld camera watches dispassionately, with quiet attention to the miserable transaction, and leaves the cringing to the transfixed audience.) Maria's clingy, less resourceful best friend, Blanca (Yenny Paola Vega), signs up for a me-too stint, and becomes one

more responsibility Maria doesn't need. Lucy (Guilied López), a fellow mule met in passing, becomes a comrade in desperation.

Terrifying things happen to Maria, and yet they unfold, under Marston's control, with the surprise of natural coincidences rather than plot twists bent for impact. Maria's interrogation in an airport U.S. Customs room is a tense marvel, as empathetic toward the skillful customs agents as it is toward the virginal-looking, shiny-haired drug smuggler (so far from the image of evil cartel bosses). In contrast, the movie pauses in equally marvelous acknowledgment of the thriving Colombian community in Queens, N.Y., where Lucy's upstanding immigrant sister lives, a model of hardworking American averageness.

Maria Full of Grace doesn't let its protagonist off the hook for her sins—the girl is no saint in an illegal underworld reeking with

crime and death, nor is she intended to be so. But neither does this outstanding film—the worthy Dramatic Audience Award winner this year at Sundance—lose sight of the effect a movie-maker's grace can have on our forgiveness of sinners. **A**—LS

TOUCH OF PINK

Jimi Mistry, Kyle MacLachlan
R, 92 mins
(Sony Pictures Classics)

Who to consult when wrestling with coming out? Cary Grant.

With closeted gay Muslim Canadian men so woefully underrepresented in romantic comedies, I'm inclined to swallow the marshmallow samosa that is *Touch of Pink* with a polite smile of international cooperation: At last, an iteration of *My Big Fat [Insert Colorful Ethnicity Here] Wedding* for the rest of them!



MacLachlan has a touch of drink

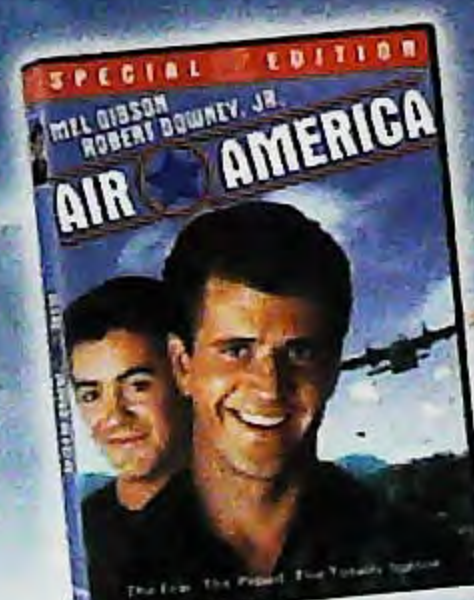
Anyway, the sugary sweetness of writer-director Ian Iqbal Rashid's feature debut only aches when I bite down. Alim (*The Guru's* Jimi Mistry) lives in London with his boyfriend (Kristen Holden-Ried), an ocean away from his

tongue-flapping extended South Asian family back in Toronto. Usually, whenever the cinema-besotted Alim needs guidance on how to live the suave closeted life, he talks to Cary Grant, his very special imaginary friend. (Kyle MacLachlan conjures Grant in the flesh, making the most of his *Gunga Din* chin.) But the matinee idol is of no help when Alim's status-conscious widowed mother (Suleka Mathew) shows up in London intent on marrying off her only son.

Rashid's optimistic fairy tale is inventive, in a show-queen way, when it references Grant's filmography, including the silly 1962 Grant-and-Doris Day comedy *That Touch of Mink*. It's tougher to take when, for the umpteenth time, Mom doesn't ask and Alim can't tell the very obvious. **B-**—LS

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Relive the on-set antics and production experiences in newly videotaped interviews from select members of the cast and crew as they reflect on making AIR AMERICA. Also included are perspectives of historians, along with the filmmakers, in a detailed discussion on the controversial assertions that the film makes about the CIA and the drug trade in Laos.

★ Theatrical Trailer

*Special Features Not Rated

MARIO KASSAR AND ANDREW VAJNA PRESENT A DANIEL MELNICK/INDIEPROD PRODUCTION A ROGER SPOTTISWOODE FILM
MEL GIBSON ROBERT DOWNEY JR. "AIR AMERICA" NANCY TRAVIS DAVID MARSHALL GRANT LANE SMITH
MUSIC BY CHARLES GROSS MUSIC SUPERVISED BY BECKY MANCUSO AND TIM SEXTON PRODUCTION DESIGNER ALLEN SHAPIRO AND JOHN ESKOW
EDITED BY JOHN BLOOM AND LOIS FREEMAN-FOX DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ROGER DEAKINS, B.S.C. PRODUCED BY MICHAEL J. KAGAN
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MARIO KASSAR AND ANDREW VAJNA BASED ON THE BOOK BY CHRISTOPHER ROBBINS SCREENPLAY BY JOHN ESKOW AND
RICHARD RUSH PRODUCED BY DANIEL MELNICK DIRECTED BY ROGER SPOTTISWOODE

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THE DOOR IN THE FLOOR

Jeff Bridges, Kim Basinger
R, 111 mins. (Focus)

Hollywood veterans enliven a tale of lust, loss, and longing

Jeff Bridges has always been the most soulful beach boy in American movies. An alluring intelligence underlies his floppy-haired nonchalance, yet what has made him a singular actor is the look of faraway hope in his eyes—the sense that he's dreaming of something just around the corner from the present. In *The Door in the Floor*, Bridges plays Ted Cole, a famous author-illustrator of children's books who lives in the tony beach village of East Hampton, N.Y. At 54, Bridges, with a salt-and-pepper beard, knows how to embody a randy, hard-drinking local literary star so that you see the slightly

Bridges
under troubled
waters



debauched arrogance of his charm yet like him a lot anyway.

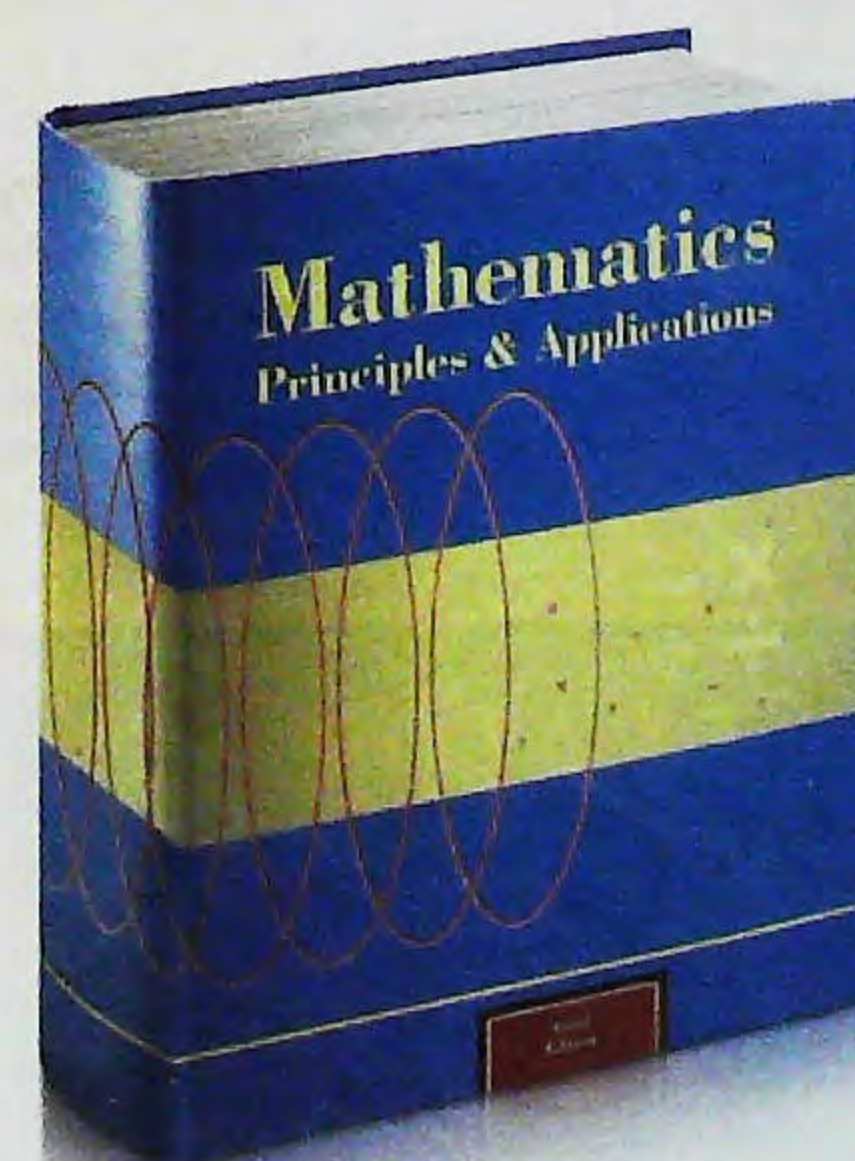
Early on, Ted informs his wife, the beautiful but saddened Marion (Kim Basinger), that he wants a trial separation, and that he's planning to hire an assistant for the summer. He implies that the two actions are linked, and when the assistant, Eddie (Jon Foster), all virginal gawks and stammers, shows up and starts to sleep with

Marion, it's not quite the clandestine tryst it appears to be. There's every indication that Ted, in effect, has set the two of them up.

The Door in the Floor is based on the first third of the 1998 John Irving novel *A Widow for One Year*, and, as adapted (and updated from the '50s) by writer-director Tod Williams, who made the Garpish *The Adventures of Sebastian Cole*, it's easily the most

robust and compelling movie ever spun off from Irving's work. (True confession: I've hated all the rest of them.) Ted hasn't separated from Marion by caprice. They are both in a state of suspended mourning due to the death of their two teenage sons; that tragedy is the film's central mystery. When Ted, who has lost his driver's license because of his drinking, has Eddie chauffeur him around town, notably to the house of a socialite (Mimi Rogers) he's sketching in the nude, the farcical sex play has a desperate undercurrent—it's Ted's denial of darkness. With its mood of summer limbo blanched by marital discord and death, *The Door in the Floor* held me to the end, yet it bears the fingerprints of an overly symmetrical literary design. Everything in the movie—family demons, May-December sex, the lessons of writing—ties together with pinpoint precision. That's a pleasure, to be sure, and a limitation, too. **B+** —OG

+Movies



Expand your mind. Well, enough of that.

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THE GONG SHOW
Gong Li, Tony Leung Ka Fai
PG-13, 97 mins.
(Sony Pictures Classics)

It's a slow, bumpy, subtitled ride to sexual enlightenment

The iconically placid beauty Gong Li from *Raise the Red Lantern* usually represents all that's cover-girl serene in Chinese art-house cinema. But playing the title character in the gauzy, Westernized contemporary romantic drama *Zhou Yu's Train*, Gong almost breaks a sweat—almost—as a woman wafting between two lovers. One's a commitment-phobic poet (Tony Leung Ka Fai, not to be confused with Tony Leung Chiu Wai from *In the Mood for Love*); the other's a livelier veterinarian (Honglei Sun) who tries to persuade Zhou to wake up and dump the withholding mope. The train she takes from A to B rocks

with its own sexual symbolism. Directed by Sun Zhou, the movie follows convoluted narrative tracks. By the end of the drowsy journey, the characters are indistinguishable from the scenery. **C+** —LS

THE HUNTING OF THE PRESIDENT

Unrated, 89 mins. (Regent)

A doc that's almost Bubba-licious

As much as conservatives loathed the phrase "vast right-wing conspiracy," some of us who are closer to the center had a problem with it as well. Hillary Clinton's famous *j'accuse* left out far too much—like, say, the influence of *The New York Times* in inflating the mirage of corruption that was Whitewater. So I was pleasantly surprised to see that *The Hunting of the President*, an unabashed piece of documentary advocacy by Harry Thomason and Nickolas Perry, doesn't let the media off the hook. The film is a sobering chronicle of the depressing circus of persecution and pseudo-scandal that was the Clinton years. But why did the President provoke such ire? A movie with insight into that might actually feel new. **B** —OG

ASK THE CRITIC Lisa Schwarzbaum

Poli Grippped



Fahrenheit 9/11 raises some political temperatures

When giving a positive or negative review to a political movie like *Fahrenheit 9/11*, is it difficult to put your own politics aside? —Denise Wicker The official answer is, I can watch anything with a neutral mind. The human answer is, Of course it's a challenge: We all react instinctively to movies, all movies, through the filter of our own values, and issue-oriented films are meant to goose. Besides, a he or she who is not provoked—one way or another—by the politics of *Fahrenheit 9/11* is a he or she without a pulse. The key word, though, is "difficult." As a private citizen, I'm perfectly comfortable pumping my fist at the screen and yelling "Right on!" or rolling my eyes and yowling "Bite me!" But as a critic, I find it perfectly (or at least imperfectly) easy to acknowledge my own political point of view and then step back to analyze what message a movie is trying to convey, how it goes about fulfilling its aims, and what I think of the art that results.

SEND QUESTIONS TO ASKTHECRITIC@EW.COM, OR POST THEM ONLINE AT EW.COM/ASKTHECRITIC

Now Playing

AMERICA'S HEART & SOUL PG, 88 mins. A blandly assembled series of docu vignettes about what makes the U.S. of A. the U.S. of A. Gorgeous travelogue cinematography aside, it's a big Disney sapfest. **B-** (#774, July 16) —Gregory Kirschling

ANCHORMAN: THE LEGEND OF RON BURGUNDY PG-13, 91 mins. Ron, a talking stooge, will read whatever is placed in front of him, and he treats his own brain, too, as a kind of TelePrompTer. Will Ferrell does a variation on his specialty: the completely unjustified egomaniac. There are a few laughs, but Ron is a little too derivative—he's Ted Baxter with a touch of Wild and Crazy Guy. **C+** (#774, July 16) —OG

BEFORE SUNSET R, 80 mins. In the sequel to Richard Linklater's 1995 romance, Jesse (Ethan Hawke) and Celine (Julie Delpy) meet up again. The last scene is as blissful as anything in a movie this year. **A** (#773, July 9) —OG

THE CLEARING R, 91 mins. What's known in the biz as an alternative for adult moviegoers. Which is to say Robert Redford plays a kidnapped businessman in a pensive, performance-driven drama devoid of special effects and noise. **B-** (#773, July 9) —LS

DE-LOVELY PG-13, 124 mins. Kevin Kline makes Cole Porter a playful sweet-and-sour sophisticate. We can accept this tidy version of Porter's life because the songs so fully express his spirit. **B+** (#773, July 9) —OG

DODGEBALL: A TRUE UNDERDOG STORY PG-13, 96 mins. Ben Stiller and Vince Vaughn in a send-up of the underdog sports-film genre that's hilariously fake and rude. **B+** (#773, July 9) —LS

FAHRENHEIT 9/11 R, 116 mins. Michael Moore's film is a smash-and-grab polemic, but it's highly resonant Bush-bashing, since the President does most of the work for it. **B+** (#773, July 9) —OG

KING ARTHUR PG-13, 126 mins. Claims to be the real story. Is actually the old story of a middling, ersatz, historical epic featuring joyless, synthetic battles, a lot of fog, and Keira Knightley in leather warrior wear. **B-** (#774, July 16) —LS

METALLICA: SOME KIND OF MONSTER Unrated, 140 mins. In 2001, the members of Metallica allowed directors Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky to film the recording of their latest album. What might have been a glorified MTV special is instead one of the most revelatory rock portraits ever made. **A** (#774, July 16) —OG

RIDING GIANTS PG-13, 101 mins. Even those challenged by wading pools are bound to be caught up in the surfing fever that surges through this vibrant docu about big waves and the West Coast pioneers who rode them. **A-** (#774, July 16) —LS

SLEEPOVER PG, 90 mins. On a scavenger hunt, a pack of teens brand-drop their way from light fetish to Internet dating, all in a consequence-free environment. **F** (#774, July 16) —Scott Brown

SPIDER-MAN 2 PG-13, 127 mins. A triumphant sequel that may be the first great comic-book movie in the age of self-help and CGI wizardry: Both the thrills and the therapeutic personal growth are well earned. **A** (#773, July 9) —LS

WHITE CHICKS PG-13, 105 mins. Marlon and Shawn Wayans go undercover as tiara brats. There are a few tickles of surprise. **C+** (#773, July 9) —OG

Box Office



HEADLINE NEWS

Tonight...at 11! See how one movie, *Spider-Man 2*, dropped 61 percent and still finished in first place with \$45.2 million! Learn how Will Ferrell's *Anchorman* (No. 2) grossed more than its \$25 million production budget in just three days! Hear the sad tale of the very expensive *King Arthur* (No. 3), which attracted just \$15.2 million in ticket sales! Stay awake to find out how *Sleepover* (No. 10) became the most recent teen comedy to underperform! And watch as documentaries *Riding Giants* (No. 32) and *Metallica: Some Kind of Monster* (No. 48) attracted audiences in droves! All that and sports...next!

TOP 20

		WEEKEND GROSS*	NUMBER OF SITES	WEEKEND PER-SITE AVERAGE	PERCENTAGE CHANGE**	WEEKS IN RELEASE	GROSS TO DATE
1	SPIDER-MAN 2	\$45.2	4,166	\$10,845	-61	2	\$256.4
2	ANCHORMAN	\$28.4	3,091	\$9,193	—	1	\$28.4
3	KING ARTHUR	\$15.2	3,086	\$4,923	—	1	\$23.6
4	FAHRENHEIT 9/11	\$11.0	2,004	\$5,504	-50	3	\$80.1
5	THE NOTEBOOK	\$6.5	2,288	\$2,858	-37	3	\$43.1
6	WHITE CHICKS	\$6.2	2,201	\$2,831	-46	3	\$56.9
7	DODGEBALL: A TRUE...	\$5.7	2,444	\$2,336	-50	4	\$97.9
8	THE TERMINAL	\$5.0	2,313	\$2,151	-54	4	\$65.3
9	SHREK 2	\$4.5	2,142	\$2,078	-47	8	\$418.5
10	SLEEPOVER	\$4.2	2,207	\$1,890	—	1	\$4.2
11	HARRY POTTER...	\$4.1	2,002	\$2,024	-53	6	\$232.8
12	GARFIELD	\$1.9	1,681	\$1,122	-56	5	\$68.0
13	TWO BROTHERS	\$1.2	1,267	\$975	-68	3	\$15.7
14	THE CLEARING	\$1.2	261	\$4,447	+87	2	\$1.9
15	THE STEPFOOD WIVES	\$1.1	1,033	\$1,059	-66	5	\$56.6
16	THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW	\$1.1	728	\$1,481	-60	7	\$182.1
17	NAPOLEON DYNAMITE	\$0.6	141	\$3,935	-30	5	\$3.0
18	CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK	\$0.5	520	\$1,030	-71	5	\$55.7
19	BEFORE SUNSET	\$0.5	63	\$7,698	+56	2	\$0.9
20	CAMPING SAUVAGE	\$0.5**	34	\$14,164	—	1	\$0.5

SOURCE: NIELSEN EDI. WEEKEND OF JULY 8-11. *WEEKEND-GROSS AND GROSS-TO-DATE FIGURES IN MILLIONS. **SOURCE: VARIETY. *INCLUDES SOME MULTISCREEN THEATERS AND PRINTS SHIPPED AS WELL AS INDIVIDUAL SCREENS. **DROPPED FROM FOUR-DAY WEEKEND

WILL SMITH Top Grossers

		OPENING WEEKEND*	NUMBER OF SITES	DOMESTIC GROSS
7/3/98	INDEPENDENCE DAY	\$50.2	2,882	\$306.2
7/2/97	MEN IN BLACK	\$51.1	3,020	\$250.7
7/3/02	MEN IN BLACK II	\$52.1	3,557	\$190.4
7/18/03	BAD BOYS II	\$46.5	3,186	\$138.4
8/30/99	WILD WILD WEST	\$27.7	3,342	\$113.7
11/20/98	ENEMY OF THE STATE	\$20.0	2,393	\$111.5
4/7/95	BAD BOYS	\$15.5	2,132	\$85.8
12/25/01	ALI**	\$10.2	2,446	\$58.2
5/28/93	MADE IN AMERICA	\$9.3	2,048	\$44.7
11/3/00	THE LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE	\$11.5	2,061	\$30.9

SOURCE: EXHIBITOR RELATIONS CO., INC. *OPENING-GROSS AND DOMESTIC-GROSS FIGURES IN MILLIONS. **TUESDAY ONLY RELEASE

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DVD & Video



Rockin' cops:
Stiller, Wilson;
(inset) Soul
and Glaser

That '70s Show

The beat goes on—movie- and TV-style—in the DVD outings of the dynamic disco duo. by Ty Burr

STARSKY & HUTCH
Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson
PG-13, 100 mins., 2004 (Warner)

STARSKY & HUTCH:
The Complete Second Season
Paul Michael Glaser, David Soul
Unrated, 21 hrs., 1976-77
(Columbia TriStar)

When in doubt, goof on the '70s. That's the lesson of the big-screen version of *Starsky & Hutch*, where the laughs come from Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson parodying the polyester

excesses of the disco decade. But there's a different lesson to be gleaned from the TV-graveyard trawl *Starsky & Hutch*, and that's that the '70s were actually damn cool to start with.

The five-disc extravaganza of the classic cop show is skimpy on the extras, and you have to adjust your settings to compensate for the clashing plaids, but the kicky guest stars more than make up for it: fading Hollywood queens like Joan Blondell, rising TV royalty like Suzanne Somers,

even an impossibly young Jeff Goldblum. Leads David Soul and Paul Michael Glaser are less given to macho posturing than either memory or the new *S&H* serves, and the plots are gritty, the sexuality frank, the Afros huge, and the dialogue surprisingly funny—with the exception of a cornball kidnapping episode written by a young Michael Mann.

Bits from the show get regurgitated in the Stiller-Wilson re-vamp: Hutch's wealthy-cowboy disguise is a tip of the hat to episode 12. (Starsky alter ego Maury Finkle, by contrast, is all Stiller and pure genius.) The film sustains a genial mockery that extends to the extras: In the droll on-set documentary, everyone in the cast expresses intense loathing for everyone else. Even Soul and Glaser, poker-faced as ever, drop by to dump on the proceedings. Movie: **B+** TV show: **A-**

DVD Q&A

Janet Leigh



With Jonathan Demme's *Manchurian Candidate* in theaters July 30, the sweet, sexy gal from the original talked to EW about the 1962 film (PG-13, 127 mins., MGM), the remake, and what that surreal train scene is all about. —Jeff Labrecque

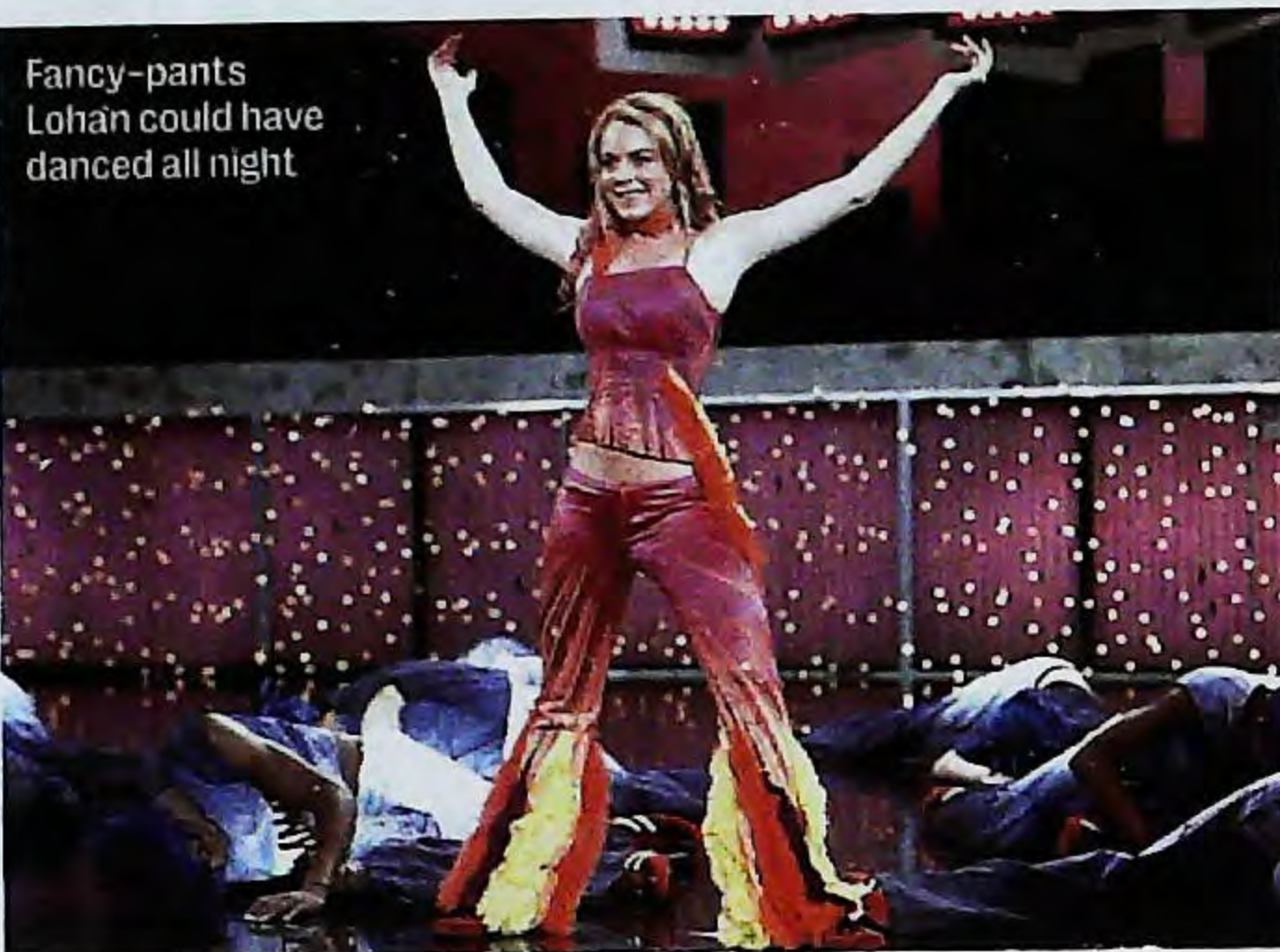
What made *The Manchurian Candidate* so special? I just remember the complete newness of what director John Frankenheimer did. His technique of the garden party turning into the Chinese military was brilliant. What's really going on in that scene on the train when you meet Frank Sinatra? You can't tell whether I'm crazy or the bad guy or the good guy or what. John said it was the most difficult scene because Frank and Larry Harvey have had 20 minutes to capture the audience, and I've got 20 seconds. Are you ready for the remake? I'm very interested in seeing how they play it. My only question is, in 1962, this was so innovative and so unacceptable in the audience's mind. Are people too sophisticated for it now?



Historical Peg of the Week

'THE RACE TO THE MOON'
A&E and the History Channel honor the 35th anniversary of the giant leap for mankind with an inside look at the shuttle, the Apollo program, and declassified plans to land on Saturn.

Fancy-pants Lohan could have danced all night



CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN

Lindsay Lohan, Carol Kane
PG, 90 mins., 2004 (Disney)

Lindsay Lohan could be a one-gal *Breakfast Club*. Embellishing the standard story line of teens in search of a really rockin' party, *Confessions* introduces a hyperbolic parade of fantasy

personas to the redhead's résumé—disaffected glam-rock groupie, Gandhi wannabe, ghetto-fab *My Fair Lady*, and *Mean Girls*-marred Mary among them. Passing off adolescent angst as bubblegum pop art, Gail Parent's blithely bittersweet script prefaces the sharper teenybopper tirade of *Mean Girls*. Yet while Tina Fey's caustic collage of skits held Lohan riding

shotgun, *Confessions* proves that this drama queen is perfectly comfortable driving her own vehicle. **EXTRAS** An on-set featurette shows a jitterbugging Lohan, but the real draw is director Sara Sugarman's ever-changing faux-'hawk hairdo. **B+** —Timothy Gunatilaka

HOW'S YOUR NEWS?

Documentary
Unrated, 82 mins., 2002
(Shout! Factory)

This low-budget-looking doc—executive-produced by *South Park*'s Trey Parker and Matt Stone—operates on the idea that watching five physically and mentally disabled adults travel cross-country in an RV and play newscaster for man-on-the-street interviews is intrinsically funny. And you know what? Maybe it is. Even if every encounter doesn't pop, there are laughs aplenty, as when a lovable lug named

Ronnie keeps asking people about his "spiritual brother," *Medical Center* star Chad Everett, or a sweet-tempered guy with Down syndrome named Sean neglects yet again to come up with the killer follow-up question. Most astonishingly, this screwball little movie rarely feels exploitative—and is actually rather moving.



News-makers Bobby and Ronnie

Busloads of **EXTRAS**, including a touching meeting between Ronnie and Everett, and the original pilot, featuring a hilarious interview with random crazy New Yorker "Hank the Blank, the Motherf---ing Skank." **B+** —Gregory Kirschling

DIRTY DANCING: HAVANA NIGHTS

Diego Luna, Romola Garai
PG-13, 105 mins., 2004 (Lions Gate)

There's a little something for everyone in this poorly made but somehow endearing not-quite-a-sequel (or even a prequel). "It's not just a romance, it's a romance and a musical and a drama and a movie about a culture and a movie about a foreign country and all these things," explains director Guy Ferland. Wow! Where's the kitchen sink? Taking place several years before Baby was put in the corner in the Catskills, this ode to bump and grind is set against the Cuban Revolution of the late 1950s. You know the rest—cute, poor waiter (Luna) meets pretty, rich girl (Garai), class lines are

crossed, families overcome prejudice, and the dances, well, they must be danced! What's not to love? **EXTRAS** The deleted scenes deserve what they got, but watch the steamy Yerba Buena video and the two featurettes for good dance rehearsal footage and lots of face time for the very charming Luna. **B** —Amy Feitelberg



Are you Havana good time?

BACK IN THE DAY

Olivier Martinez



French kiss: Martinez, Grinberg

Très beau Olivier Martinez made plenty of lusty ladies shimmy in their seats with his seduction of Diane Lane in *Unfaithful*. But his breakthrough, César-winning performance in Bertrand Blier's *Un Deux Trois Soleil*

(Unrated, 104 mins., subtitled, 1993, Home Vision), a dramedy about a girl growing up in Marseille's multiracial slums, may leave mainstream audiences squirming. Living with her mad mom and drunk dad and desperate for affection, Victorine (petite Anouk Grinberg, who artfully transforms from wide-eyed schoolgirl to reluctant wife) watches her hopes of escaping her bleak world die with her first love (Martinez, who magnetizes the screen throughout his all-too-brief appearances). Nonlinear vignettes, scenes that push sexual boundaries between adults and children, and a female lead who sees dead people make getting to the heart—and the heartthrob—of the story difficult. **EXTRAS** Director filmography? Zut alors! We want Martinez! **C+** —Erin Richter



HBO
VIDEO

The Charts



OUR AIN TRUE LOVE

Film fans trekked up *Cold Mountain* and cut a swath for *Barbershop 2*, but where have all the telephiles gone? Not too many cult TV fans tuned in to *South Park*, *Reno 911!* (19th) dropped out, and *Chappelle's*

slipped to No. 10 in its 19th week. Newcomers *Dawson's Creek* (No. 14) and *Wonder Woman* (No. 11) couldn't even lasso a golden finish. It's official: Ice Cube is hotter than Lynda Carter (huh?).

TOP 10 DVD SALES

	LAST WEEK		BOX OFFICE GROSS TO DATE*	WEEKS ON CHART	EW GRADE
1	—	COLD MOUNTAIN	\$95.6	1	A-
2	—	BARBERSHOP 2: BACK IN BUSINESS	\$65.1	1	B+
3	1	BAD SANTA—UNRATED (WIDE)	\$60.1	2	D+
4	2	SECRET WINDOW	\$47.8	2	B
5	3	50 FIRST DATES (WIDE)	\$120.8	3	C-
6	4	LOTR: THE RETURN OF THE KING (WIDE)	\$377.0	6	A-
7	—	SOUTH PARK: FOURTH SEASON	—	1	A-
8	6	MYSTIC RIVER (WIDE)	\$90.1	4	B
9	5	THE SIMPSONS: FOURTH SEASON	—	3	A
10	7	CHAPPELLE'S SHOW: SEASON ONE	—	19	A-

TOP 10 TAPE RENTALS

	LAST WEEK		VIDEO SALES TO DATE*	BOX OFFICE GROSS TO DATE*	WEEKS ON CHART	EW GRADE
1	—	COLD MOUNTAIN	\$1.7	\$95.6	1	A-
2	1	50 FIRST DATES	\$5.5	\$120.8	3	C-
3	2	SECRET WINDOW	\$3.0	\$47.8	2	B
4	—	BARBERSHOP 2: BACK IN BUSINESS	\$1.2	\$65.1	1	B+
5	3	MYSTIC RIVER	\$6.4	\$90.1	4	B
6	4	BAD SANTA	\$2.1	\$60.1	2	D+
7	5	ALONG CAME POLLY	\$4.5	\$87.9	4	B-
8	6	MONSTER	\$4.6	\$34.5	5	B
9	—	THE PERFECT SCORE	\$0.4	\$10.4	1	D+
10	9	THE LAST SAMURAI	\$8.1	\$111.1	9	B

SOURCES: VIDEO BUSINESS/RENTAL FOR THE WEEK ENDING JULY 4, 2004; NIELSEN EDI *IN MILLIONS

NOW IN STORES

THE ASSASSINATION BUREAU (PG, 109 mins., 1969, Paramount) Bold news-woman Diana Rigg challenges head hatchet man Oliver Reed to order a hit on himself in this cat-and-mouse thriller, also featuring a pre-Kojak Telly Savalas.

THE DREAMERS (NC-17, 115 mins., 2004, Fox) Bernardo Bertolucci's sexed-up love letter to 1968 Paris is more, um, fleshed out here than in the tamer R-rated version—but rest assured, there's no Brando butter scene à la *Last Tango*.

THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD (G, 199 mins., 1965, MGM) George Stevens' passion play is gloriously resurrected on DVD with Max von Sydow playing Christ in the decidedly un-Mel Gibson-esque family-friendly classic, also featuring a pre-*Assassination Bureau* Telly Savalas as Pilate.

NEVER DIE ALONE (R, 89 mins., 2004, Fox) DMX and David Arquette star in Ernest Dickerson's gory gangsta noir. Bonuses include a making-of doc, commentary by the rap star, and 11 additional scenes—which the director cut presumably in order to minimize shared screen time between the unlikely costars.

STAR TREK VOYAGER: THE COMPLETE THIRD SEASON (Unrated, 19 hrs., 46 mins., 1996-97, Paramount) The massive seven-disc set offers 26 eps and interviews with astrophysicists, writers, producers, cast, crew, Captain Sulu, and virtually every other person in the galaxy—except Telly Savalas.

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14

Television



Distressed for success:
(clockwise from top left)
Mills, Smith, Baxter, Light

Female Troubles

A schlocky new documentary shows it's Lifetime as usual for TV's women in peril. by Ken Tucker

TV MOVIE SUPERSTARS: WOMEN YOU LOVE Monday, July 19, 8 p.m. (Lifetime)

In *Baby for Sale*, the most recent Lifetime Original Movie that continues television's tradition of exploiting women under duress, Dana Delany yearns to adopt a sweet little European-born infant being peddled by a "baby trafficker." When the kiddie cad turns out to be offering the same toddler to numerous clients, chasing the highest bid,

Delany and her hubby—the chin-gifted Hart Bochner—vow to bring down the bad guy and rescue the tot.

Based on a true story, *Baby* is mawkish and predictable at every turn, but then, why shouldn't it be? It's following a time-tested formula: Find a subject with which women can empathize, play out a nightmare scenario, then allow the female protagonist to triumph. We're told at the end of *Baby*, for example, that the woman De-

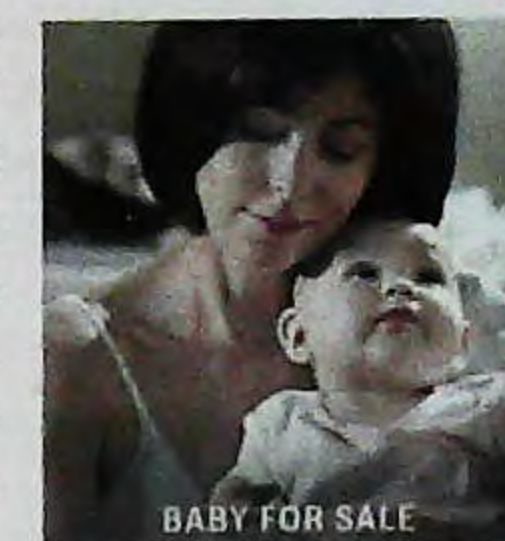
lany portrays helped get baby-selling laws passed in New York. If you missed the first embrace, you can watch Delany hug her baby again on July 18 at 7 p.m.

This week, Lifetime airs an exceedingly peculiar yet insightful documentary that shows how the telepic formula has worked like a charm—granted, a cheap, paste-on-jewelry charm—for decades. *TV Movie Superstars: Women You Love* interviews stalwarts such as Meredith Baxter, Cheryl Ladd, Donna Mills, Jaelyn Smith,

Connie Sellecca, and Judith Light as they watch clips from some of their social-realist epics. But the producers (who include Linda Ellerbee, slumming a bit from doing solid kids'-news specials for Nickelodeon) adopt a tone at odds with their subject. Surveying made-for-TV movies in which women are battered,

into commercial breaks, Sellecca, Light, and others grin and boogaloo to cheesy disco music. That's a real eye averter. And sometimes, watching the clips, they comment sarcastically about their shoulder pads and hair faux pas.

But mostly, the actresses are earnest about their roles. "I'm really proud of this one," says Light, who tears up as she looks at *Murder at My Door* (1996), in which she plays a murderer's mom. However, the scene—*Roseanne*'s Johnny Galecki walking into a burning house to his death while Light looks on in anguish—is perfectly...laughable. Let's face it, an opus such as *A Woman Scorned: The Betty Broderick Story* (1992), about a woman prone to some extremely deadly outbursts, was schlock intended primarily to give Baxter a role that would show she had range beyond Elyse Keaton in *Family Ties*.



Yet Baxter says she admired "a woman [who] granted herself full permission" to kill. "I loved the empowerment of that narcissism," adds Baxter fer-

vently. Despite spouting such psychobabble, Baxter comes across admirably and remains a prime example of why audiences like these movies: She's an actress who has faced down a mid-

Winner of the Week

GARRY SHANDLING

Heeeeere's Larry, er, Garry! After a four-year absence, the former *Larry Sanders Show* yakker dusts off his tux to host the 56th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards, Sept. 19 on ABC.



career crisis and emerged with dignity and a sizable paycheck. Jolly good for her! *TV Movie Superstars* also provides subtexts for the observant viewer: When Stefanie Powers reminisces about her 1989 movie *Love and Betrayal*, she notes that her costar, David Birney, became upset each time they had a quarreling scene because "he was in the process of getting divorced." Gone unsaid is that he was, of course, divorcing the once Meredith Baxter-Birney.

The white, middle-class women portrayed in these movies are potent fantasy figures for a big segment of Lifetime's audience, and it's clear the actresses latch onto anything relatable in the soapy plots and junky dialogue. Says Mills of *My Name Is Kate*, for example, "There's a lot of alcoholism in my family." Sel-lecca says filming *A House of Secrets and Lies* was difficult because she virtually reenacted an adulterous scene that occurred with her "first husband." (She remarried, to John Tesh.) Maybe it's the still-raw emotions that burn through even the silliest scripts—or the cheerful inanity of *TV Movie Superstars'* framework—that gives such mediocre movies an emotional power that resonates for millions. **C+**



McDermott and (inset) Margulies

Hard Cell

Gillian Flynn says to *Grid* and bear it through part 1 of TNT's terror miniseries

Mondays, July 19–Aug. 9, 9 p.m. (TNT)

Zigzagging through London, Cairo, and D.C., with a detour to a Chechen-run auto dealership in Michigan, TNT's *The Grid* is pleasingly convoluted. Aspiring to be a character-thick, continent-hopping drama à la *Traffic*, the four-part series—starring Dylan McDermott and Julianna Margulies as U.S. agents chasing a terrorist cell—

kicks off with a no-snack-break two-hour pilot. Fifteen primary characters crowd into the first 30 minutes alone. And the audience is trusted to keep apace with the quick cuts and even quicker explanations of the terrorists' disparate motivations and ultimate goal: an attack on American and British oil interests in Nigeria, followed by attacks on the countries themselves.

But the whirligig setup is undermined by *The Grid's* plodding

dedication to the much-explored FBI-CIA turf wars (I'll pay at least \$3 to ensure that I never again have to see a quietly menacing, silver-haired man—in this case, Tom Skerritt—get "territorial"), as well as myriad footings and explosions, filmed with the stolid earnestness of people who think they're pushing orange-alert buttons. Further ampering the show's credibility is the oft-mystifying dialogue: "When you're up to your ass in alligators, it's hard to remember that your mission is to drain the swamp," murmurs Margulies' crisp NSC Maren Jackson, who until this moment has shown no predilection for bayou adages.

The swollen script is never really surmounted by Margulies and McDermott, two likable but limited actors with similar whisper-bark-smolder styles. McDermott, as an FBI agent with a superhero name (Max Canary!), is particularly ill-suited to play a roughed-up guy with the obligatory 9/11 connection. (His best friend died in the attacks; he's now dating the man's wife.) McDermott, whose innate elegance was perfect for *The Practice*, can't pull off smirky retorts like "No tea for me, unless it's from Long Island...and has ice in it."

Engaging then humdrum, smart then wildly vapid, *The Grid* is a wannabe-highbrow product of middlebrow TNT, a network that has to remind viewers "We Know Drama." Ultimately, the pilot is intriguing enough to make part 2 worth a look. The deciding factor: Jemma Redgrave, a British actress—and niece of Vanessa and Lynn—who galvanizes (and gulps whole) her every scene. As a pissy, brilliant MI-6 agent with a gift for insults so smartly tucked they have hospital corners, Redgrave gifts *The Grid* with gritty grace, and proves that she, at least, knows drama. **B-**

ASK THE CRITIC Ken Tucker



Friends' Cox Arquette

With the Emmy nominations coming up, I wonder why Courteney Cox Arquette has never been nominated, when all of her fellow *Friends* have. I say she's every bit as good, and doesn't deserve to be ignored. —Jeremy I agree, Jeremy. Cox Arquette gave Monica a manic, control-freak edge that was dependably amusing either as simmering rage or explosions into deft slapstick. She made her character's fierce competitiveness—not an attractive trait—funny. I

think she gets overlooked because the actress has always been such a selfless ensemble player. Hopefully, Emmy voters will give her a final hurrah nod on July 15. Other actors in ensemble casts who shoulda got a statue? James Marsters in *Buffy* and/or *Angel*; Claire Danes in *My So-Called Life*; Victor Garber in *Alias*. All these performers have been victims of Emmy's snobbery against teen and sci-fi shows. Finally, of course, there is the enduring crime: *The Simpsons* deserves a best-comedy Emmy, not merely the best-animated ones it's racked up. Reaching back, did you know Jackie Gleason never got an Emmy for *The Honeymooners*? Crazy!

SEND QUESTIONS TO ASKTHECRITIC@EW.COM, OR POST THEM ONLINE AT EW.COM/ASKTHECRITIC

Sound Bites



"When they busted into my house, they asked me, 'Do you have any marijuana in your house?' And I said, 'Of course, I'm Tommy Chong.'" THE RECENTLY FREED TOMMY CHONG, RECALLING THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO HIS ARREST, ON *THE TONIGHT SHOW*

"She is a sweet girl, but let's not ask her to do any long division anytime soon." WILL, TALKING ABOUT FELLOW HOUSEGUEST HOLLY, ON *BIG BROTHER 5*

"In an interview in *Esquire* magazine, Donald Trump said if he were President, he would've caught Osama a long time ago. Then somebody explained to Trump that Osama and Omarosa are not the same person." CONAN O'BRIEN ON *LATE NIGHT*

"It's kinda weird to see Spider-Man getting attacked by a guy with man boobs." COMEDIAN CHRISTIAN FINNEGAN, ABOUT ALFRED MOLINA'S DOC OCK, ON *BEST WEEK EVER*



The Ratings



BIG BROTHER 5

HOUSE RULES

The evidence is in: Project DNA rocks! The debut of *Big Brother 5* (12th) welcomed a hefty 9.5 million voyeurs—though 1.4 million fewer than last season's debut—and helped CBS win the week's top spot. Boosted

by *BB4* runner-up-turned-globe-trotter Allison, the *Eye's* *Amazing Race 5* (10th) scored 10.3 million, finishing first in its expanded time slot with the 18–49 crowd. In other race news, NBC's track-and-field and swimming Olympic trials (35th) on Sunday medaled with 6.5 million fans; ABC's *Great Domestic Showdown* (79th) failed to catch CBS' Sunday-night movie (20th); and Fox's *North Shore* and *The Casino* are crawling to the finish line, ranking a miserable 72nd and 76th, respectively.

TOP 25

	VIEWERS*		LAST WEEK
1	14.8	CSI (R) CBS, Thursday, 9 p.m.	1
2	14.0	CSI: MIAMI (R) CBS, Monday, 10 p.m.	2
3	12.4	TWO AND A HALF MEN (R) CBS, Monday, 9:31 p.m.	4
4	12.3	WITHOUT A TRACE (R) CBS, Thursday, 10:01 p.m.	3
5	12.2	EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND (R) CBS, Monday, 9 p.m.	6
6	12.0	60 MINUTES CBS, Sunday, 7 p.m.	16
7	10.8	GOLD CASE (R) CBS, Sunday, 8 p.m.	33
8	10.7	LAW & ORDER: SVU (R) NBC, Tuesday, 10 p.m.	7
9	10.6	LAW & ORDER (R) NBC, Wednesday, 10 p.m.	5
10	10.3	THE AMAZING RACE 5 CBS, Tuesday, 9:30 p.m.	—
11	9.6	THE SIMPLE LIFE 2 Fox, Wednesday, 9 p.m.	9
12	9.5	BIG BROTHER 5 CBS, Tuesday, 8 p.m.	—
13	9.2	BIG BROTHER 5 CBS, Thursday, 8 p.m.	—
14	8.9	48 HOURS MYSTERY (R) CBS, Wednesday, 10 p.m.	12
	8.9	LAW & ORDER: CRIMINAL INTENT (R) NBC, Sunday, 9 p.m.	—
16	8.8	FOR LOVE OR MONEY 3 NBC, Monday, 9 p.m.	19
17	8.7	60 MINUTES II (R) CBS, Wednesday, 8 p.m.	14
18	8.6	LAW & ORDER (R) NBC, Wednesday, 9 p.m.	17
19	8.4	LAST COMIC STANDING NBC, Tuesday, 9 p.m.	18
20	8.3	MOVIE: CATCH A FALLING STAR CBS, Sunday, 9 p.m.	—
21	8.2	YES, DEAR (R) CBS, Monday, 8:30 p.m.	24
22	7.9	LAS VEGAS (R) NBC, Sunday, 10 p.m.	—
23	7.8	MY WIFE AND KIDS (R) ABC, Wednesday, 8:30 p.m.	23
	7.8	PRIMETIME THURSDAY ABC, Thursday, 10 p.m.	22
25	7.6	FEAR FACTOR (R) NBC, Monday, 8 p.m.	10

NETWORK RANKINGS

	VIEWERS*		LAST WEEK
1	8.8	CBS	1
2	6.9	NBC	2
3	5.1	ABC	4
4	4.5	FOX	3
5	2.5	UPN	5
6	2.1	THE WB	6

* IN MILLIONS ** AVERAGE IN MILLIONS WEEK OF JULY 5–11, 2004

SOURCE: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH

UPDATE: AVERAGE JOE'S JEN L.



JEN L.

Love Story

Every so often, we at EW like to make a difference. So when *Average Joe's* Adam Mesh dumped Jen L, the most legit woman to appear on the franchise, we set out to rectify this injustice. Nearly 100 guys (not all freaks! Really!) answered our plea in issue #759, and we're overjoyed to report that L, formerly the unluckiest girl in love, has her first boyfriend. Thanks to EW. Sort of. His name is Jeff, he sells insurance, and they briefly dated in college: "He saw me on the show but didn't do anything until he saw the article [in EW] and then he called me," says L. "He's everything I want in a guy. Isn't it cute?" Yes, it is. We couldn't be happier for her. Or prouder of ourselves. —Jessica Shaw

What to Watch

A day-to-day guide to notable programs.* BY ALYNDA WHEAT

She didn't just survive her worst nightmare. She filmed it.

PRIMAL SCREAM

See one woman's struggle to stay alive in shark-infested waters.

SHARK WEEK SUNDAY, JULY 25 8PM E

Discovery
CHANNEL
entertain your brain

WITH AN EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW OF **OPEN WATER** IN THEATERS AUGUST 20TH

MONDAY JULY 19

8-9PM

TV Movie Superstars: Women You Love (Lifetime, TV-PG) Front all you want, but we both know you've been digging these chicks since *Lace*.

8-9PM

Fear Factor (NBC, TV-PG) Conclusion to the two-parter

from Sin City. Why is all of TV caving to Vegas peer pressure? Would they all jump off a bridge if the other series did it? Wait. I just remembered who we're talking about. (R)

10-11PM

CSI: Miami (CBS, TV-14-V) When a bodyguard dies at a rap concert, Horatio and the gang go after the shooter. Why does

rap always get slammed? No one ever mentions the thuggish brutality in emo. (R)

SEASON PREMIERE 10-10:30PM

Girls Behaving Badly (Oxygen, TV-14) Everyone is watching! They all have hidden cameras! Somehow this seems in direct violation of the Patriot Act—not that I've read it.

9-10:15PM

Detained (Sundance Channel, TV-14) Israeli filmmakers Anat Even and Ada Ushpiz spent months documenting the struggle of three young Palestinian widows who raise their 11 children in a Hebron apartment building that straddles the border between Israeli- and Palestinian-controlled land. Their brief, apolitical film is a frightening, frustrating glimpse into a tragic existence punctuated by roadblocks, machine guns, and, at one improbable point, a Jewish-Muslim snowball fight that injects a rare dose of camaraderie. If only for a moment. —Joshua Rich **A-**



Living on the edge

TUESDAY JULY 20

8-9PM

Politics and the Media (Discovery Times Channel, TV-PG) Is political coverage biased? Oversaturated? Ooh, that's a toughie. I've been too busy with Scott Peterson and Kobe Bryant trial coverage to notice.

SEASON PREMIERE 8-10PM

King of the Jungle 2 (Animal Planet, TV-G) Reality show contestants act like animals. On purpose. For a change.

people out of food for \$10 grand? Copasetic—if you're cute.

SERIES DEBUT 9-10PM

Things I Hate About You (Bravo, TV-14-D) I vow to love, honor, cherish, and never drag you onto a reality TV show, as long as we both shall live.

9-10PM

Big Brother 5 (CBS) Purple hair? Bootable error. Screwing

10:30-11PM

Crank Yankers (Comedy Central, TV-14) Wow, we may actually need a third season of this show, at least when its prank calls prove clever (Ludacris tells the then president of his label that he wants to change his name to Peanut Head, and the yes-man's first question is "It wouldn't be...Peanut Head a.k.a. Ludacris?"). Or when they're revealing (a woman willingly agrees to role-play with Sarah Silverman's Hadassah, who's hiring someone to visit her sick, senile granny). But when a motive appears mean-spirited—Special Ed asks a librarian to define the word *moron* just so he can insinuate that she is one—a dial tone would be funnier. —Mandi Bierly **B-**



Season premiere



Brandy

THE GUEST LIST

Look Who's On the Couch

THE VIEW Monday Kim Cattrall, musical guest Brandy Tuesday Mena Suvari Wednesday Kaley Cuoco (8 *Simple Rules*) Thursday Sharon Stone

DAVID LETTERMAN Monday Denzel Washington Tuesday Halle Berry Wednesday Sharon Stone, musical guests the Yeah Yeah Yeahs Thursday Matt Damon, musical guests the Hives Friday Brittany Murphy

JAY LENO Monday Benjamin Bratt, musical guest John Mayer Tuesday Bill Maher Thursday Julia Stiles Friday Musical guests Five for Fighting

WEDNESDAY JULY 21

9-11PM*
1421: The Year China Discovered America? (PBS) It's possible they were here 71 years before Columbus. And, like, 16,000 years after Native Americans. *check local listings

10-10:30PM
Famous (Biography Channel) This week: Robin Williams.

He's a Juilliard-trained actor, Oscar winner (with three additional nominations), two-time Emmy winner (with four extra nods), and the star of *Patch Adams*.

10-10:30PM
TV Land's Top 10: The Andy Griffith Show (TV Land, TV-G) Or, day one of the week-you-couldn't-stop-that-friggin'-whistling.

9-9:40PM
My Family (BBC America) Even Anglophiles realize the notion that British is always better is, well, bollocks. Case in point: this stale series about an average couple (Robert Lindsay and Zoë Wanamaker, right) and their three children. While occasionally amusing (*Love Actually*'s Kris Marshall, far right, carries his scenes with amiable goofiness), the material feels as fresh as reruns of *The Cosby Show*. In the end, the cloying laugh track serves only as an annoying reminder of what we failed to find funny. **C-**



Season premiere

FRIDAY JULY 23

9-10PM
Dr. G: Medical Examiner (Discovery Health, TV-PG) Between *CSI*, *Forensic Files*, and the myriad other series offering post-mortem entertainment, we've come to think of the deceased as plot lines. *Dr. G*, to its credit, tries to inject humanity into the format. Florida-based forensic pathologist Dr. Jan Garavaglia isn't just piecing together death's clues for her files, she's also trying to give families closure. In the premiere episode, an elderly woman's children wrestle with their mother's possible suicide, while a husband wonders why his seemingly healthy 35-year-old wife died in the night. Dr. Garavaglia weighs both the science and the families' observations to find a cause of death. One quibble: The show relies too heavily on reenactments—both in flashbacks and in what should be actual autopsies—to tell its stories. But *Dr. G* never ceases to be fascinating and compassionate. **B+**



Series debut

THURSDAY JULY 22

8-8:30PM
Scrubs (NBC, TV-14) Dr. Cox steps up his campaign of terror against the residents who think the new dad has gone soft. Clearly, these are people who have never spent the night with an infant. (R)

SERIES DEBUT
9-10PM
Studio 7 (The WB) It's a quiz show! It's a reality show! It's told in flashback! It's already way too complicated for me.

9-10PM
Tru Calling (Fox, TV-PG) Call me a wuss, but hearing the dead cry for help never stops being creepy. (R)

10-10:30PM
MXC (Spike TV) For those of us who liked *Takeshi's Castle* but secretly wished it could be redubbed so as to make even less sense in English.



Votes? Please. Let's talk shrimp.

10PM-12AM
Washington Wives (A&E) Washington is full of sex, lies, and red tape. So it's a shame that no dirty little secrets are revealed in this mild, unbiased docu about D.C. dames. With an election looming, *Wives* could have been the perfect venue for political spouses Teresa Heinz Kerry and Elizabeth Edwards to sway voters. Instead, we learn that Teresa is allergic to shellfish and that Elizabeth can craft a dandelion headdress faster than you can say "Kerry for President." —Karyn L. Barr **C**

8-9PM
CMT Most Shocking: Feuds! (CMT, TV-PG) Country's tiffs, including the "Travis Tritt-Billy Ray Cyrus mullet melee." It gets to that level only when the front ain't really taking care of business, and the party in the back's just out of control.

8-10PM
Rush Hour 2 (TNT, TV-14-LV) Remember that silent hour in *Cast Away*? Profoundly affecting. And Samantha Morton's role in *Sweet and Lowdown*? Breathtaking. And who could forget Holly Hunter's Oscar turn in *The Piano*? Amazing. This movie stars Chris Tucker.

8-10PM
Heartbreakers (TBS, TV-14-DLS) Chris Tucker-free. But I still can't let you watch it.

8-10PM
Kingdom Come (UPN, TV-PG) Ibid.

9-10PM
20 Funniest Videos (CMT, TV-PG-L) One minute, they're feuding; the next, they're laughing at themselves. It's the moonshine.

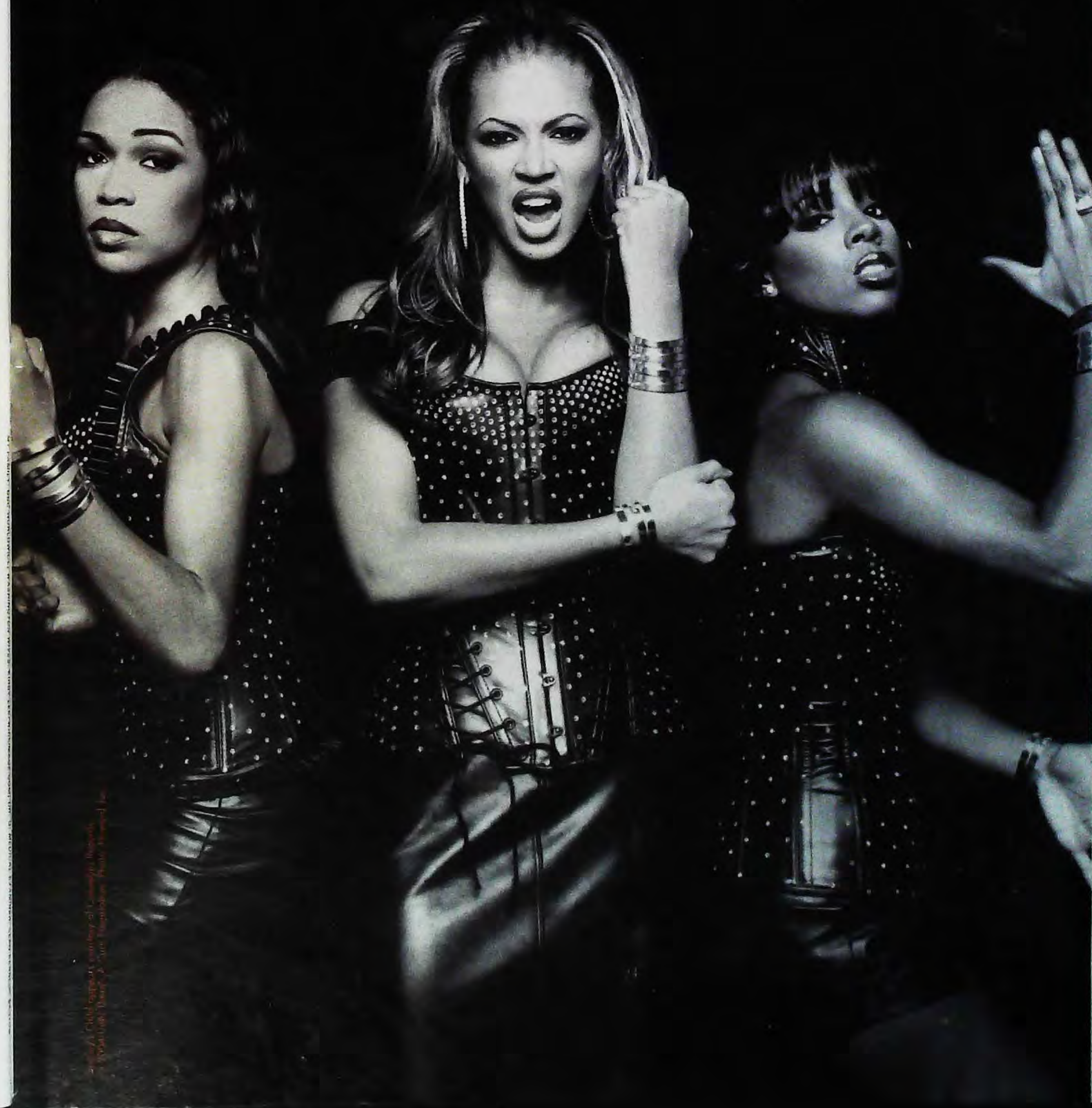
9-10PM
Joan of Arcadia (CBS, TV-PG) Why can't Joan and God work out a deal? He gives her lottery numbers, she gives some cash to charity. That's fair. (R)

10-10:59PM
Las Vegas (NBC, TV-14) One of the show's best episodes. Big Ed (James Caan) picks up on Nessa's signals that a player has a bomb. Ed is the Man! And I'm not saying that because I once called Mr. Caan "scary." He is a lovely man who just happens to be a karate expert. (R)

10-11PM
Tony Danza's Brooklyn (Travel Channel, TV-PG) He never quite left that cab, did he?

WHY DOES DESTINY'S CHILD WEAR THE BRACELET?

Michelle, Beyoncé and Kelly wear it to raise desperately needed funds for HIV/AIDS care services, education and vaccine development. Over half a million people have chosen to wear The Bracelet. What about you? Available at: The Body Shop; Kenneth Cole; Virgin Megastore; Ben Bridge Jewelers and other fine retailers. Or visit us at WWW.UNTIL.ORG or call 1-800-88-UNTIL to order. **until** THERE'S A CURE



**"EVERY BODY HAS A STORY.
MY JOB IS TO FIND IT."**



NEW REALITY SERIES

DR. G: MEDICAL EXAMINER

PREMIERES FRIDAY JULY 23, 9PM E/P

Discovery Health
CHANNEL

Real Life. Medicine. Miracles.

WHAT TO WATCH

SATURDAY JULY 24

8-10PM

Chicken Run (NBC, TV-G) And lo, the little children asketh unto their parents how their McNuggets came to be. And the parents spaketh unto them the name "Ginger." And the little children ateth the fowl no more.

8:30-9PM

COPS (Fox, TV-PG) Special edition of drug busts, including the one where the dude tells the cop there are drugs in the car, just

because the cop asks nicely. Your mother was right: Common courtesy gets you everywhere. She also said not to do drugs, but that boat's sailed, no? (R)

9-10PM

America's Most Wanted: Where Are They Now? (Fox, TV-PG-V) Wasn't the point that we're already supposed to know where they are? In jail.

9-MIDNIGHT

Diamonds Are Forever (TV-PG) Let the church say, "Amen."



True grit

superlatives, Peckinpah's show lasted a mere half season. This episode kicks off a 24-hour retrospective on the director, including such films as *Major Dundee* and *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia*, and concluding with a documentary on the man himself airing tomorrow night at 8. But there's no better place to start than with the show that has *Deadwood* in its debt. **A-**

7:30-8PM

The Westerner (Westerns, TV-PG) "We got a long way to go yet. We got us a man to kill when we get there," declares Dave (a pre-*Family Affair* Brian Keith, left), the antihero in Sam Peckinpah's 1960 series. Gritty and raw long before HBO made those

SUNDAY JULY 25

2-3PM

CBS Sports: 2004 Tour de France (CBS) Cycling's most grueling race comes to the end, with Lance Armstrong going for his sixth consecutive crown. Forget the war. This is why the French hate us.

4-6PM

Champ Car World Series (Spike TV) Look at them racing around the streets of Vancouver, taking out pedestrians left and right! Canadians are so nice.

7-8PM

O'Shea's Big Adventure: Amazon Snake Mystery (Animal Planet, TV-G) Mark O'Shea, parselmouth of repute, hunts the rain forest for the 40-foot-long green anaconda. Which makes the safe distance from O'Shea roughly, oh, 41 feet, give or take.

SHARK ALERT!

8-9PM

Shark Week (Discovery Channel, TV-PG) Cue the music. Strap on the fin. Everyone's favorite week in animal-scare-tactic programming is back! This show features an underwater photographer who was surrounded by sharks and managed to get the entire ordeal on film. It's like the Velveteen Rabbit said: Salable footage makes you real. Or something like that.

8-9PM

Cold Case (CBS, TV-PG-LV) No sidekick. No tête-à-têtes with God. No psychic powers. How does she do it? (R)

8-9:30PM

Salt (Sundance Channel, TV-

14) Boy meets girl. Boy and girl's sister take road trip and car breaks down. Self-discovery ensues. Usually, that means sex.

9-10PM

Law & Order: Criminal Intent (NBC, TV-14) Yes, Detective



Season premiere

10-11PM

Dead Like Me (Showtime, TV-14) This self-involved comedy about a ragtag group of grim reapers led by young George (the promising Ellen Muth, right) is still trying too hard in its second season. Working from its *Joan of Six Feet Under* template, the derivative and only half-funny hour entertains in starts and stops—its strange pacing is a fatal flaw. The crew surrounding George on her soul-taking missions doesn't help matters: For every spunky Jasmine Guy (who shines as Roxy, the show's token Mouthy Black Woman), there's a Callum Blue, who plays the tedious Mason (left), a bumbling troublemaker with no business wasting viewers' precious time. The most touching plot—the dissolution of her parents' marriage—sends George into a tailspin, but it's crowded out by too much clutter. And why is everybody always cussing?! Oh, that's right, this show is supposed to be edgy. If only. —Nicholas Fonseca **C-**

Goran is not only brilliant and a freak, he's brilliant because he's a freak. We get it. (R)

9-10PM

Six Feet Under (HBO, TV-MA) Rico, Rico, Rico. How is it that in a house where the father gets slammed by a bus, the daughter is knocked up by her bisexual lover, the daughter-in-law mysteriously walks into the ocean, and the new husband gets poo packages from his own son, you turned into the wack job?

10-10:30PM

Dr. 90210 (E!, TV-PG) New and improved plastic surgery reality show; this one with 60 percent less sleaze.

10-11:00PM

Crossing Jordan (NBC, TV-14) I'm casting a ballot for Jill Hennessy as best L&O ADA. She was so much cooler all buttoned-up and page-boyed than as this drama queen.

10-11PM

The Days (ABC, TV-PG-LV) The perfect overachieving family. Except the mother and teen daughter are pregnant at the same time. Is this Disney's new definition of family values? I can dig it.

10:30-11PM

It's Good to Be Justin Timberlake (E!, TV-PG) Are we dating now? I just assumed that's what they meant.

Swede emotion: Almqvist (center) and his dapper dons



If Looks Could Thrill

David Browne wishes the Hives' new CD were as crisp as their suits

THE HIVES

Tyrannosaurus Hives (Interscope)



The Hives are part of a great rock & roll tradition—it just isn't the one they *think* they're continuing. In their minds, they're

heirs to the rudest underground subversives of the last 50 years, starting with the classic garage purists. And based on their early work, particularly their American breakthrough album, *Veni Vidi Vicious*, the Hives had the musical muscle spasms to back up their claim.



Bizarro Debut of the Week

THE RAMONES

Eighteen songs by the scruffy New York City legends are being featured in *Gabba Gabba Hey!*, a musical premiering in Perth, Australia, next month. Land of Oz, prepare to get punk'd!

On *Tyrannosaurus Hives*, the Swedes also try to be a tad weightier and, momentarily forgetting their own place in post-modern-rock history, fall victim to some of the same traps to which the B's succumbed.

Rather than recalling shaggy-haired rock animals of the mid-'60s, the Hives now sound as if they've logged serious time trolling the punk and post-punk sections of record stores. The new tunes have a pithier, nastier edge: The influence of the Clash, for instance, is apparent in the reggae-on-speed riffing of "A Little More for Little You," while the Ramones loom in the exclamatory put-downs of "Dead Quote Olympics." As he did on the last album's "Die, All Right!" singer Pelle Almqvist—half man, half cartoon—takes frequent aim at corporate conformity: "Tried to stick an office worker inside of me!" he yelps in "Abra Cadaver." Almqvist sings every song that way—as a scrawny-throated taunt—even when the band essays a snide ballad in "Diabolic Scheme": There, Almqvist takes great delight in the return of someone who once ditched him, while behind him and the band, a string section jabs and pokes demonically.

That diversion aside, what's largely absent from *Tyrannosaurus Hives* are the garage-punk novelties (like *Veni Vidi's* "Main Offender" and "Hate to Say I Told You So") that made the Hives such an amusing sideshow. Instead, too many tracks amount

to herky-jerky guitar parts stapled together with power but not as much precision. "Walk Idiot Walk," the single, wants to duplicate the dismissive sneer of vintage Iggy Pop and the Stooges but feels robotic.

Something else is missing as well. For decades, bands have had to cope with a variation on the criticism "Their records are okay, but you *have* to see them live." Few new-millennium rockers fall into this great divide as much as the Hives. The best way to experience them remains on stage, where it's plenty easy to be seduced by their matching suits and shoes, mismatched 'dos, puppets-on-strings moves, and Almqvist's faux-Jagger preening and self-conscious rock-star patter. Next to those sights, listening to *Tyrannosaurus Hives* is akin to hearing a Broadway cast disc: Without the visuals, you're not getting the whole picture. Having nailed the novelty aspect of their appeal, the Hives need to work on the rest of their package. **B-**

Reissues

FACES

Five Guys Walk Into a Bar... (Rhino/Warner Bros.)



Sadly, Rod Stewart's '70s pub-rock gang is best known nowadays for the remake of "Ooh La La" in a car commercial. But these four discs of album tracks and rare stage and radio performances make the case that the Faces should be remembered as more than just a defunct band. One of their decade's warmest, scrappiest, and most joyful acts, they were capable of both folkie intimacy (thanks to the late Ronnie Lane) and pranksterish



Stewart: never met a pair of shears he didn't like

BAD FOR LOLLA, GOOD FOR US

Perry Farrell might be weeping into his glseng-spiked smart drink, but Lolla-palooza's premature demise has an upside: Your alternative-rock faves will be playing intimate clubs for \$20 instead of massive, impersonal genera-sheds for \$50. Several of the acts have already paired off for summer jaunts. Here's a quick rundown of the best Lolla-survivor gigs:

- Yes, they are floating on. Suddenly hot Northwest quartet and MTV/VH1 regulars **MODEST MOUSE** have teamed up with underrated Dylan-goes-punk New Yorkers the Walkmen on selected dates in July and August, kicking off July 16 in Chico, Calif.
- The *Hair*-meets-Flaming Lips spectacle that is **THE POLYPHONIC SPREE** hits the road with British granola-rockers Gomez for 28 dates starting July 16 in Vancouver. Can't beat a good glockenspiel solo.
- Don't miss the psychedelic-rock tag-team event of the summer: Thundering, larger-than-life riffers **THE SECRET MACHINES** are



Might as well jump: the Polyphonic Spree

joining forces with the Hello Sequence for a series of shows, including a July 16 stop in Raleigh, N.C. —Michael Endelman

Pop/Rock

ASHLEE SIMPSON

Autobiography (Geffen)



Though she's got an MTV reality show of her own, 19-year-old Simpson insists she's nothing like her famous sister. But while she now dyes her tresses black and postures as a rock & roller (her weathered rasp resembles Courtney Love's), she's every bit as pop as Jessica—even if she savvily cribs from Avril instead of Mariah. Her *Autobiography* is packed with insidiously catchy songs, especially the first single, "Pieces of Me," in which she sings the praises of canoodling with a friend. But halfway through the album, the recipe gets repeated and you find yourself yawning despite the hooks. If

Simpson really wants to be a rock chick, she shouldn't have made such a formulaic debut. That's what pop stars do. **B-** —Michelle Kleinsak

THE CONCRETES

The Concretos (Astralwerks)



If Nico had collaborated with Phil Spector instead of Lou Reed, she might have turned out like the Concretos' Victoria Bergsman. The frontperson of this eight-person collective delivers their moving songs for the dumped in an affectless voice as cold as a winter in Sweden (the album was recorded in a country house in the band's native land). But the staccato horns and guitar drones bathed in Wall of Gloom reverb provide just enough warmth to ward off frostbite. **B+** —Marc Weingarten

great'ness (n.)-marked by outstanding achievement or importance.

Greatness. We all aspire to it. For some it can take a lifetime. For others, it comes in an instant.

For Tyler Hamilton, honorary chairman of the MS Bike Tour, it was the moment he got back on his bike after breaking his collarbone on the first day of the Tour de France—ultimately finishing the race, 21 days later, in fourth place.

For those who ride in the MS Bike Tour every year, greatness comes from putting aside the reasons why they can't ride to find the reasons why they can. Reasons that bring hope to the 400,000 people who live with the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis.

This is why we ride.

What is greatness? We invite you to find out for yourself. This year, come ride the MS Bike Tour.

To find the Bike Tour nearest you, log on to nationalmssociety.org or call 1-800-FIGHT MS.

ms bike tour
Meet the Challenge. Make a Difference.

+ Music

'JESUS WALKS,' KANYE TALKS

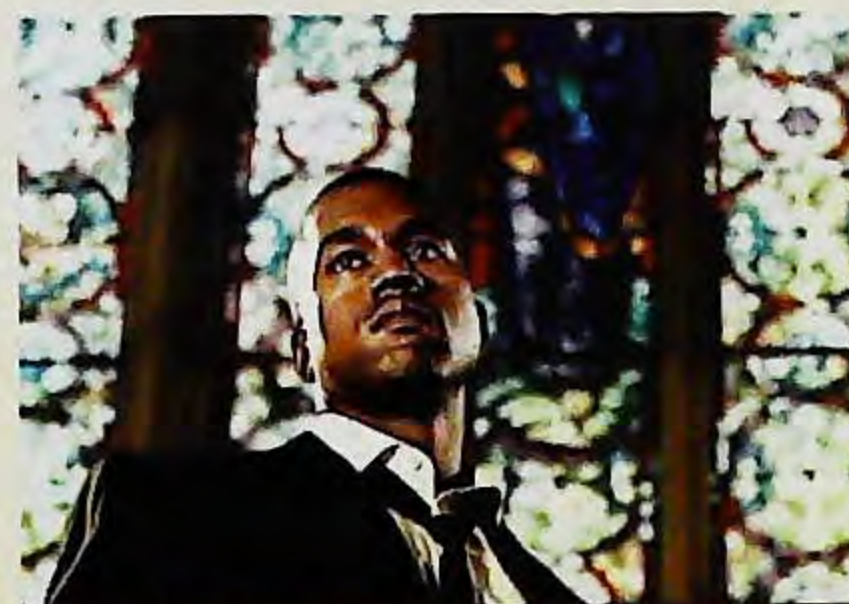
Poor Kanye West. The ubiquitous rap star had to settle for only three video versions of his single "Jesus Walks," an ode to the man on the cross. "The song evokes so many thoughts it couldn't have been limited to just four minutes of visuals," insists West. The arresting interpretations of the fervent hip-hop-gospel track, the third hit from his double-platinum debut, *The College Dropout*, are sure to get the *TRL* kids' attention: Kanye preaches! A Klansman burns! And in the third version (available only on MTV.com), Jesus literally—get this—walks! West tells EW about his holy trinity. —Raymond Fiore

DIRECTED BY Michael Haussman

(Madonna's "Take a Bow") "When I saw the L.A. background, it left a weird taste in my mouth, like it was an Ice Cube video from back in the day. I like the video, but I just wasn't quite satisfied. The day [after we finished], I saw Jay-Z's '99 Problems' video. That put the battery in my back."

DIRECTED BY Chris Milk (West's "All Falls Down") "The KKK is the closest thing to the devil for black people in the South. The point [of this clip] is that no matter what you do, God is still there for you. I think it's a classic. [The burning Klansman is] one of the most memorable video images. The production value is great on this one."

DIRECTED BY Coodie & Chike (Pitbull's "Culo") and Kanye West "Chris' version



Version 1: the church of Kanye



Version 2: searing images



Version 3: Jesus is his homeboy

was really good, but I thought we were missing the dance moves. So I went and did another that I felt, like, captured the hood. My thing is, there's no telling if I'm going to be around next year, but while I'm here, I'm gonna make history."

JESSE HARRIS AND THE FERDINANDOS

While the Music Lasts (Verve/Forecast)



The guy who doesn't want you to think of him as just the guy who wrote "Don't Know Why" for Norah Jones writes himself some loping melodies, and sings them in a voice even more passive than Jones'. Guitarist Tony Scherr plays lots of stinging riffs, which are occasionally anesthetized by Van Dyke Parks' string arrangements. The

album is pretty, compromised, lulling, and precise—and about as warm as that description. **C**—Ken Tucker

THE HELIO SEQUENCE

Love and Distance (Sub Pop)



For a self-recorded duo from Portland, Ore., the Helio Sequence have a glorious oversize, and overstuffed, sound. Dotted with wheezing harmonicas, Morse-code Casio blips, and trippy guitar spirals, *Love* has

enough hooks to fill the next NOW comp. "This is an S.O.S.," Brandon Summers pleads at one point, though in reality these studio tinkers need no help at all. **B+**—ME

Country

JIMMY BUFFETT

License to Chill (RCA Nashville/Mailboat)



"Am I country, pop, or rock & roll?.../ It's simply complicated," the beachcomber croons on *Chill*, which features collaborations with country stars like Toby Keith and George Strait. Buffett's smart—he knows the country demo is his as well, and clever genre mash-ups like "Conky Tonkin" and the oldie "Sea of Heartbreak" make this experiment work. Core Parrotheads may be initially confused by the twangy vocals, but

then, happy befuddlement is their concert state of mind anyway. **B**—KT

JOE NICHOLS

Revelation (Universal South)



Can Nichols, whose 2002 debut garnered three Grammy noms, really be the next master traditionalist, fit to rub elbows with Haggard and Jackson? Certainly he's not playing it safe in covering the audacious title track, a 1972 Waylon Jennings song that fuses politics, sex, and the Second Coming. But if Nichols' bruised baritone can't convey the numbness of Iris Dement's "No Time to Cry," he's nothing short of eloquent in hoisting a beer to "Farewell Party," a tune made famous by Gene Watson. Pull up another bar stool, fellas. This new kid's here to stay. **B+**—Alanna Nash

DOWNLOAD THIS



► Still crying about missing **THE PIXIES** at Coachella? There, there—make it all better by downloading their first new song in a decade, a playful Kim Deal-penned ditty called "Bam Thwok." ITUNES.COM



► Once again proving that his *Grey Album* was no fluke, **DANGER MOUSE** teams with rapper MF Doom for a tender trip-hop remix of "Somersault," a track by U.K. soulsters Zero 7. WAXPLOITATION.COM/DMECARD2



► While veggie poster boy **MOBY** might seem a strange collaborator for hip-hop legends Public Enemy, musical sparks fly on their rousing, political online track "Make Love F--- War." ITUNES.COM



► Who's the boss now? **PATTI SCIALFA** (a.k.a. Mrs. Springsteen) shows off her seductive sandpaper pipes on the live version of "23rd Street Lullaby," her new album's title track. REAL.COM/RHAPSODY

The Chart



THE STONE AGE

When it stops raining, it stops pouring. Last week, new releases filled half the top 10 slots; this week, you have to drop to No. 14 to find a debuting album. That'd be neo-soul diva Angie Stone's *Stone Love*, which bowed with a modest 53,000 copies. Lloyd

Banks wasn't sinking like a stone, but a falloff from 434,000 to 164,000 suggests his No. 1 days are numbered. Meanwhile, genre-bending country duo Big & Rich have enjoyed bigger and richer sales almost every week they've been out, and they did it again with a 16 percent increase, selling 75K to leap to No. 6.

POP ALBUMS

	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART
1	1	LLOYD BANKS <i>The Hunger for More</i> , G-Unit/Interscope	2
2	2	USHER <i>Confessions</i> , LaFace/Zomba	16
3	8	GRETCHEN WILSON <i>Here for the Party</i> , Epic Nashville	9
4	4	JADAKISS <i>Kiss of Death</i> , Interscope	3
5	11	AVRIL LAVIGNE <i>Under My Skin</i> , Arista/RCA	7
6	13	BIG & RICH <i>Horse of a Different Color</i> , Warner Bros. Nashville	10
7	9	VARIOUS ARTISTS <i>Spider-Man 2</i> soundtrack, Columbia	3
8	14	VELVET REVOLVER <i>Contraband</i> , RCA	5
9	6	BEASTIE BOYS <i>To the 5 Boroughs</i> , Capitol	4
10	16	LOS LONELY BOYS <i>Los Lonely Boys</i> , Or/Epic	20
11	17	JOJO <i>JoJo</i> , Blackground/Universal	3
12	12	D12 <i>D12 World</i> , Shady/Interscope	11
13	5	LIL' WAYNE <i>Tha Carter</i> , Cash Money/Universal	2
14	—	ANGIE STONE <i>Stone Love</i> , J	1
15	3	BRANDY <i>Afrodiziac</i> , Atlantic	2

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AIN'T THAT PECULIAR? A look beyond the top 15 albums

NO CABLE NO CRY Larry the Cable Guy has been supplanted at No. 1 on the catalog chart by longtime king Bob Marley. But their sales—14,800 vs. 13,400—aren't far apart. Aren't they kin, sort of, anyway? Larry's album is *Lord, I Apologize*; Marley reveres Jah. Larry "Couldn't Keep the Pizza Lit"; Catch a Fire, suggests Marley. Compare their albums' 11th tracks—for Larry, "Going in Circles for Two Hours"; for Marley, "Waiting in Vain."

TRADING SPACES It'd be immodest of them to mention, but while Modest Mouse's last album, 2000's *The Moon & Antarctica*, sold only 68,000 copies, their newest, *Good News for People Who Love Bad News*, is moving about 40,000 a week, for a 13-week total of 510,000. Headed the other way: Alanis Morissette's *So-Called Chaos* fell to No. 82 in week 7, its 317,000-unit tally well outside spittin' distance of *Jagged Little Pill*'s 14.3 million.

SINGLES SEEN Singles are a dead medium—except every time a new round of *American Idol* revives the format. Fantasia's "I Believe" sold 81,000 in week 3, pushing its tally to 225K. At No. 2, A1 runner-up Diana DeGarmo's "Dreams" bowed with 65,000. After that, things drop off faster than the ocean floor. Ashlee Simpson's third-place "Pieces of Me" moved a mere 7,700 pieces.

ALL FIGURES REFLECT SALES THROUGH THE WEEK ENDING JULY 4, 2004.



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+ Books

Worth the Weight

Jerry Stahl's *I, Fatty* sizes up the scandalous life of '20s star Roscoe Arbuckle. by Lisa Schwarzbaum

Novel (Bloomsbury, \$23.95)



Only in Hollywood, kids, only in Hollywood would a late-20th-century literary celebrity more famous for his former heroin addiction than for his scripts identify so eagerly with the miseries of an early-20th-century movie celebrity more famous for a rape and murder he didn't commit than for his innovations in comedy filmmaking. Well, here's an arsenic-laced taste of Tinseltown: In his furious yet forgiving autobiographically shaped novel *I, Fatty*, L.A. noir hipster Jerry Stahl, author of the 1995 bowels-of-H'wood junky-lit confessional *Permanent Midnight*, assumes the identity of corpulent silent-era superstar Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle (1887-1933) with all the tumultuous relief of a drunk stumbling upon salvation at an AA meeting

on Sunset and Vine. And in the way that creative magic sometimes happens even when the subject is ruin, the mind meld does both men a weird world of good.

Arbuckle's story is not, to be sure, unknown. The legendary funnyman matches Chaplin and Keaton in industry importance and public adulation. A fat, unloved, dirt-poor boy from Kansas, Arbuckle—always known as Roscoe to his friends—came west by way of vaudeville (surviving the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 to do so). He worked with Mack Sennett, invented pie fights, gave Chaplin his first pair of Little Tramp pants, and was the first star to be paid a million bucks a year.

Arbuckle also drank dangerously, lived decadently, and battled an addiction to heroin. And partying in the wrong place at the wrong time, in a San Francisco hotel room in 1921, he was



Silent-screen legend Arbuckle; author Stahl (below)

accused of the rape and murder of a young actress named Virginia Rappe during a showbiz-sour orgy. Although acquitted after three trials (Rappe's death was most likely the result of a botched abortion), Arbuckle's reputation never recovered: He was the victim of the first media-driven Hollywood scandal, a sacrificial pioneer in the field of good versus bad celebrities, as decided by a public unhampered by truth.

"My attorney told me I was the symbol of everything perceived as evil or depraved in Hollywood itself," Stahl writes, with the kind of hardened hindsight that comes to those who know how *The Business* works in the age of O.J. Simpson. "Those screaming headlines in the papers weren't just savaging Fatty Arbuckle—they were savaging the movies. Show business

was being denied bail." *I, Fatty* is strewn with tough little boluses of rue and Freudian self-analysis ("Inside every fat man is a really fat one who's stuck"). But there is also something protective and affectionate in Stahl's call-me-bubber-thighed rant, lament, and eulogy.



Lashing out at the terrible father who didn't love him or confessing his shyness with women, Stahl-as-Arbuckle gets as close to emotionally approachable as we're

likely to read from the smack-in-the-face author of the novels *Perv* and *Plainclothes Naked*. Arbuckle, in turn, exhibits more virility than old photos of the real man in prissy-boy costumes suggest. And thus is Hollywood rewarded with a kind of hooray, too, if only as a jungle haven for a man as complicated yet creative as Arbuckle—or Stahl. **B+**

OFF RAMP

Hank Stuever
Essays (Henry Holt, \$24)

Editor's Choice



Chandra Levy, self-storage facilities, *Star Wars* fanatics, and water-bed saleswomen receive equally lovely treatment from *Washington Post* writer Stuever's razor-sharp eye. Rightly calling himself "a man who thinks too much and too sadly about that which is faddish and gone," Stuever homes in on the banal but still-beating heart of Americana from stints in Albuquerque, Austin, and D.C. "Xanadu Tuesdays" gives roller disco aficionados a wistful shout-out; "All Faiths" considers the competitive verve of a Texas funeral director; and "Notes on Kamp" (slyly aping the title of Susan Sontag's landmark 1964 treatise) takes readers into the nether regions of a KOA Kampground. Stuever writes in a warm, knowing tone well-suited to his low-key subjects, and because he misses nothing, these meaningful stories offer a master class in top-notch journalism. **A**—Nicholas Fonseca

BLACKBIRD HOUSE

Alice Hoffman
Stories (Doubleday, \$19.95)



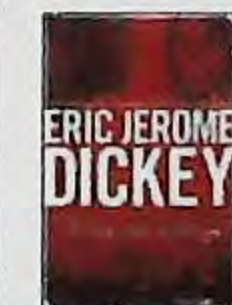
Families from 3,000 centuries—or perhaps it's just three and feels like so many more—populate *Blackbird House*, Hoffman's turgid collection of interwoven short stories set on a Cape Cod farm. Hoffman (*Practical Magic*) spins a phantasmagoria of color—a white blackbird, red boots, apricot light, purple, pink, and white sweet peas, and a woman named Violet—at the expense of

plot, exposition, and dialogue. Somewhere in this rainbow, sons die, lovers leave, and people get married, but who cares? The characters are so unrefined and underwritten it would take a genealogist to untangle their relationships. That leaves you rooting for the return of a very hungry halibut, who makes a meal of a fisherman early in the book, to put the rest of these

folks out of their (and your) misery. **D**—Henry Goldblatt

DRIVE ME CRAZY

Eric Jerome Dickey
Novel (Dutton, \$23.95)



The best-selling author of *The Other Woman* steers a new course to L.A., where an African-American

ex-con named Driver chauffeurs a limo and starts banging the African-American wife of his white boss. Trouble surfaces when he reneges on a deal to murder her likable husband and fails to return the cash advance. *Crazy* is a hot, sexy novel from a veteran purveyor of black lit that could help while away a long summer day. Or a long summer drive. **B-**—Lynette Rice

BETWEEN THE LINES

Black Comedy

Director Reginald Hudlin and cartoonist Aaron McGruder team up on a topical graphic novel. by Troy Patterson



A funnies thing happened on the way to *Birth of a Nation* (Crown, \$25), a collaboration between *House Party* director Reginald Hudlin and Aaron McGruder, creator of the satirical comic strip *The Boondocks*. For years, Hudlin, 42, had dreamed of making a civil war comedy—not of the blue and the gray, mind you, but of the Republic of Blackland. "A secession story set in my hometown of East St. Louis," Hudlin calls it, speaking of the predominantly black and prevailingly bleak Illinois city. "When you live in a place like that, you at least contemplate,

"Would we be better off on our own?"

In the summer of 2001, inspired by Florida's electoral irregularities, Hudlin and McGruder—friends currently shopping the pilot for a *Boondocks* TV series—started a screenplay imagining East St. Louis revolting against a U.S. led by an unmistakably Bushian cabal. They wrote drafts, then set them aside. ("After Sept. 11," says McGruder, 30, "we didn't know if we would ever be allowed to critique the government again—at least in terms of somebody paying money for us to critique the government.") By the time they finished, they decided studios wouldn't have an appetite for a comedy pitting the current administration against a nation whose anthem is adapted from *Good Times*' theme song. Says Hudlin: "It's not even something I went around to pitch."

The published book, featuring art by cartoonist Kyle Baker ("I actually think my strengths lie more in writing than drawing," McGruder explains), isn't exactly a director's cut. Many scabrous subplots were jettisoned along the way. "In the original concept," McGruder says, "the new country legalized drugs, and so it became party central for all the white spring-break kids and amongst them was the President's daughter."

Winner of the Week

SEAN CONNERY

He's the man now, dawg! The Scottish actor will collect a reported seven figures from Harper UK for his memoir, due in British bookstores in 2006. A U.S. publishing deal has yet to be finalized.



SOCK

Penn Jillette
Novel (St. Martin's Griffin, \$12.95)

One of life's few certainties: A serial-killer thriller narrated by a sock monkey is going to be good. Magician

Penn Jillette's Teller-less novel is good, and occasionally great. Dickie is a worldly, wiseass sock monkey, owned by an NYPD diver dubbed Little Fool who's never quite grown up. One day, Little Fool finds his ex-girlfriend's corpse and turns PI. The plot is thin, but knowingly so; it's just a cage for Jillette's rabid little storyteller, who speaks in dense, pop-steeped paragraphs. *Sock* is a risky and raunchy ride that manages to be, of all things, a screed against faith, God, and imaginary friends. Jillette stumbles only with an overly blunt final twist. Novelists should never reveal their tricks. **B+**—Jeff Jensen



FIELD STUDY

Rachel Seiffert
Stories (Pantheon, \$19.95)



In one story of this captivating collection, a promising young architect with singular vision steadily unravels into an unemployed, impoverished basket case: "The turmoil and confusion, concession and healing. The arguments, bitterness, and lessons learned. All these have left the mark of compromise on him." Indeed, Seiffert is fascinated by the marks of

compromise on people, including a grad student in search of toxins who befriends a potentially contaminated local mother and son, a hairdresser trying to come to terms with her unlovable, sickly daughter, and young parents rendered immobile by their 3-year-old, who doesn't want to move to a new home. Because Seiffert writes without judgment or sympathy, her flawed characters are all the more compelling.

A-—Jessica Shaw

THE MYTH OF SOLID GROUND

David L. Ulin
Nonfiction (Viking, \$24.95)

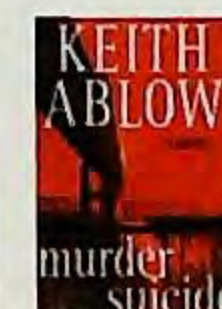


Being frail mortals, we tend to look for reason or explanation in seemingly random, destructive forces. Such is the case with earthquakes: What we once thought were the movements of some

restless giant animals we now attribute to the (more plausible, but much less imaginative) displacement of massive subterranean plates. Ulin offers an engaging survey of modern earthquake science, a "constantly shifting middle ground between research and folklore, legend and fact," and places it in the context of the loopy denial mechanism at work in most Californians' "If we don't think about it, we'll never have to face the Big One" attitude. This smart and engaging book will make you think twice about the ground beneath your feet. **B+**—Wook Kim

MURDER SUICIDE

Keith Ablow
Suspense (St. Martin's, \$21.95)

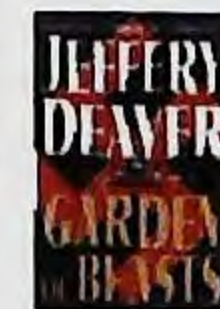


This magazine once compared Ablow to Thomas Harris, which you'll no doubt note on *Murder Suicide's*

dust jacket. It appears Ablow's also been channeling another revered master of murder most foul: Agatha Christie. The elegantly complicated forensic psychiatrist Dr. Frank Clevenger is still front and center, but this time there's no manhunt, no ornately macabre crime scenes, and the victims, a brilliant Boston inventor plagued by epilepsy and his beautiful-but-borderline mistress, at first appear to be just gruesome suicides who bought it the same day. But Clevenger methodically interviews the suspects—the powerful business partner, the aloof wife, the enraged husband, the unhinged daughter, the arrogant neurosurgeon—and his insight into their psyches (and his own) moves the plot along at an appropriately brisk clip. Then he gathers everyone for the Big Reveal. It's enough to make Miss Marple proud. **B+**—Adam B. Vary

GARDEN OF BEASTS

Jeffery Deaver
Novel (Simon & Schuster, \$24.95)



Nazis. We hate those guys. And in *Garden*, Deaver brings a surprisingly nuanced eye to the National Socialists in the days before the 1936 Olympics, capturing the terror that soaked Berlin that summer. But don't worry: *Garden* is also a zippy tale about an American hitman in town to do one last job—on a high-ranking (though fictional) Nazi official. The supporting cast is classic noir: the intrepid cop, the sad ex-teacher landlady, the local huckster, all straight out of central casting. Crammed full of historical references (at one point, Jesse Owens saves our hero's hide), *Garden* is the rare thriller that deals in layered emotions but still gives one good ride. **B**—Whitney Pastorek

Best-Sellers



FAN OF 'LETTERS'

Enthusiasts of James Patterson's Alex Cross mysteries will have to wait. The author's latest, *Sam's Letters to Jennifer*—the story of a widow, her grandmother, and their affairs—debuted at No. 2. Meanwhile, Robert Kurson's deep-sea adventure, *Shadow Divers*, broke the surface of the nonfiction chart at No. 5.

FICTION

		WEEKS ON LIST
1	THE DA VINCI CODE Dan Brown, Doubleday, \$24.95	67
2	SAM'S LETTERS TO JENNIFER James Patterson, Little, Brown, \$24.95	1
3	TEN BIG ONES Janet Evanovich, St. Martin's, \$25.95	2
4	THE RULE OF FOUR Ian Caldwell and Dustin Thomason, Dial, \$24	8
5	THE FIVE PEOPLE YOU MEET IN HEAVEN Mitch Albom, Hyperion, \$19.95	40
6	THE DARK TOWER VI: SONG OF SUSANNAH Stephen King, Donald M. Grant/Scribner, \$30	4
7	ANGELS & DEMONS Dan Brown, Atria, \$19.95	27
8	ROBERT LUDLUM'S THE BOURNE LEGACY Eric Van Lustbader, St. Martin's, \$25.95	2
9	BLOWOUT Catherine Coulter, Putnam, \$25.95	3
10	SECOND CHANCE Danielle Steel, Delacorte, \$20	1

NONFICTION

		WEEKS ON LIST
1	MY LIFE Bill Clinton, Knopf, \$35	2
2	THE SOUTH BEACH DIET Arthur Agatston, M.D., Rodale, \$24.95	64
3	DRESS YOUR FAMILY IN CORDUROY AND DENIM David Sedaris, Little, Brown, \$24.95	5
4	EATS, SHOOT & LEAVES Lynne Truss, Gotham, \$17.50	12
5	SHADOW DIVERS Robert Kurson, Random House, \$26.95	5
6	FATHER JOE: THE MAN WHO SAVED MY SOUL Tony Hendra, Random House, \$24.95	5
7	THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN LIFE Rick Warren, Zondervan, \$19.99	74
8	BIG RUSS & ME—FATHER AND SON: LESSONS OF LIFE Tim Russert, Miramax, \$22.95	8
9	THE AUTOMATIC MILLIONAIRE: A POWERFUL ONE-STEP PLAN TO LIVE AND FINISH RICH David Bach, Broadway, \$19.95	16
10	THE SOUTH BEACH DIET COOKBOOK Arthur Agatston, M.D., Rodale, \$25.95	12

SOURCE: PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, WEEK OF JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2004

OPENING ACTS

"Renée is NOT my wife. Sure, she says she is. She's a sweet girl, sweet as cake batter, but she is NOT my wife and we are NOT married, despite what she may be telling people." —Beginning lines of Michael Kun's novel MY WIFE AND MY DEAD WIFE (MacAdam/Cage, \$21)

"I suck at soccer. When I was a boy, my parents would turn their backs to the field to avoid watching me play. I don't blame them." —From the prologue to Franklin Foer's HOW SOCCER EXPLAINS THE WORLD (Harper-Collins, \$24.95)

THE BOOK YOU HAVE TO READ



Erik Larson (*The Devil in the White City*) recommends Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon* (Vintage, \$11).

Every year or so I reread *The Maltese Falcon*. First, there is Hammett's prose. He cuts a line that is clean and simple, empty of the adverbs and compound adjectives that clutter the work of lesser writers. He conveys the emotions and thoughts of his characters through precise description, never stooping to so facile a tactic as telling us what his characters are feeling and thinking. Hammett also created an ensemble—Sam Spade, Joel Cairo, Brigid O'Shaughnessy, and Casper Gutman—that remains as fresh now as it was in 1930. Finally, Hammett's ear for conversation is so acute that John Huston lifted entire passages for the screenplay of his famous film adaptation.

The Sure-Fire Sequel to the Hit Comedy *The Whole Nine Yards*

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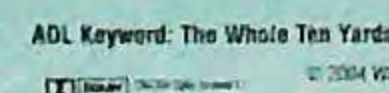
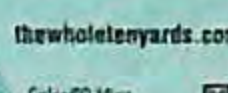
—Bonnie Laufer Krebs, TRIBUTE TV



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+ Stupid Questions



this week with... **Clay Aiken**

Ruben has a sandwich named after him. If one were to make a Clay sandwich, what exactly would it contain, besides white bread? It'd be peanut butter and macaroni and cheese mashed between two Krispy Kreme doughnuts.

That might be the most disgusting sandwich ever. Probably so. Maybe that's why I didn't win.

You supposedly saw the piece of paper in Ryan Seacrest's hand that revealed Ruben as the winner of the competition. Settle this debate once and for all: Did it also contain Seacrest's hair-frosting schedule? His is exactly the same as mine, to be honest with you.

time that you received your first wedgie? Oh goodness, my mom gave me a wedgie with the diaper a long time before that....

I actually started convincing myself that wedgies were compliments. My friends used to give me wedgies, and I would convince people that that's what they did because they were friends of mine.

You've been rooming with another *Idol* contestant, Kimberley Locke. Who decides which one of you has to do the dishes? Do friends and

family call and text-message in their votes? I just keep the house dirty as I can, and then she yells at me the next time she sees me about how nasty it is. And then we have someone come in and clean it up for us.

Who's got better second-place hair: you or Justin Guarini? Oh, are you kidding? Me! At least mine's been combed.

At age 5, you sang the Kenny Rogers-Dolly Parton hit "Islands in the Stream" during your audition to be a mascot at a high school dance. Was it also around this

Your die-hard fans are known as Claymates. So when people really start feeling your music, is it fair to say that they've contracted Claymydia? It's about as fair to say that as it is to say that a *Cheers* fan has gonorrhea. [Pause] That was disgusting. My mom is gonna be so ashamed of me. ■



ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S POP CULTURE QUIZ (EW #774)

1. Gondor; 2. *Stand by Me*, *Apt Pupil*, *The Shawshank Redemption*; 3. 1-D, 2-C, 3-A, 4-B; 4. B, Dana Owens; 5. "Love Me Tender"; 6. Cate Blanchett and Judi Dench for playing Queen Elizabeth I; 7. ABBA's "Dancing Queen"; 8. Prince Michael and Prince Michael II; 9. D, Owen Wilson's Eli Cash; 10. The Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson

It has been decreed from high above: Thou shalt not worship false idols. So how on earth should we judge the worthiness of Clay Aiken, the 25-year-old *American Idol* runner-up who just launched a 50-city tour in support of his double-platinum debut disc, *Measure of a Man*? Let's subject him to the ultimate test: a round of Stupid Questions. —Dan Snierson



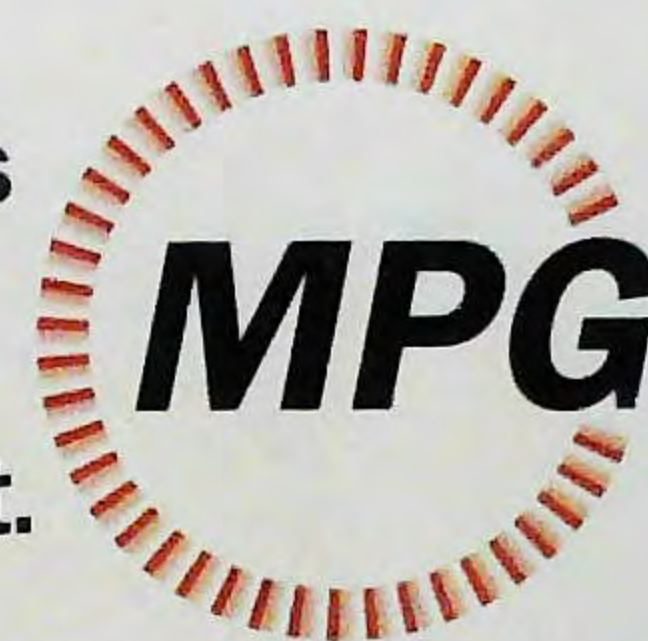
What is the exact "measure of a man"? It's 73 inches, you pervert. I'm 6 foot 1.

How does it feel to be the king of Wuss Mountain? I don't know that I'm the king of Wuss Mountain. I would call myself the mayor of Nerdville. I'm not really a wuss; I'm more of a dork. There's a big difference.

So, how does it feel to be mayor of Nerdville? Ummm...lots of low expectations, honestly.

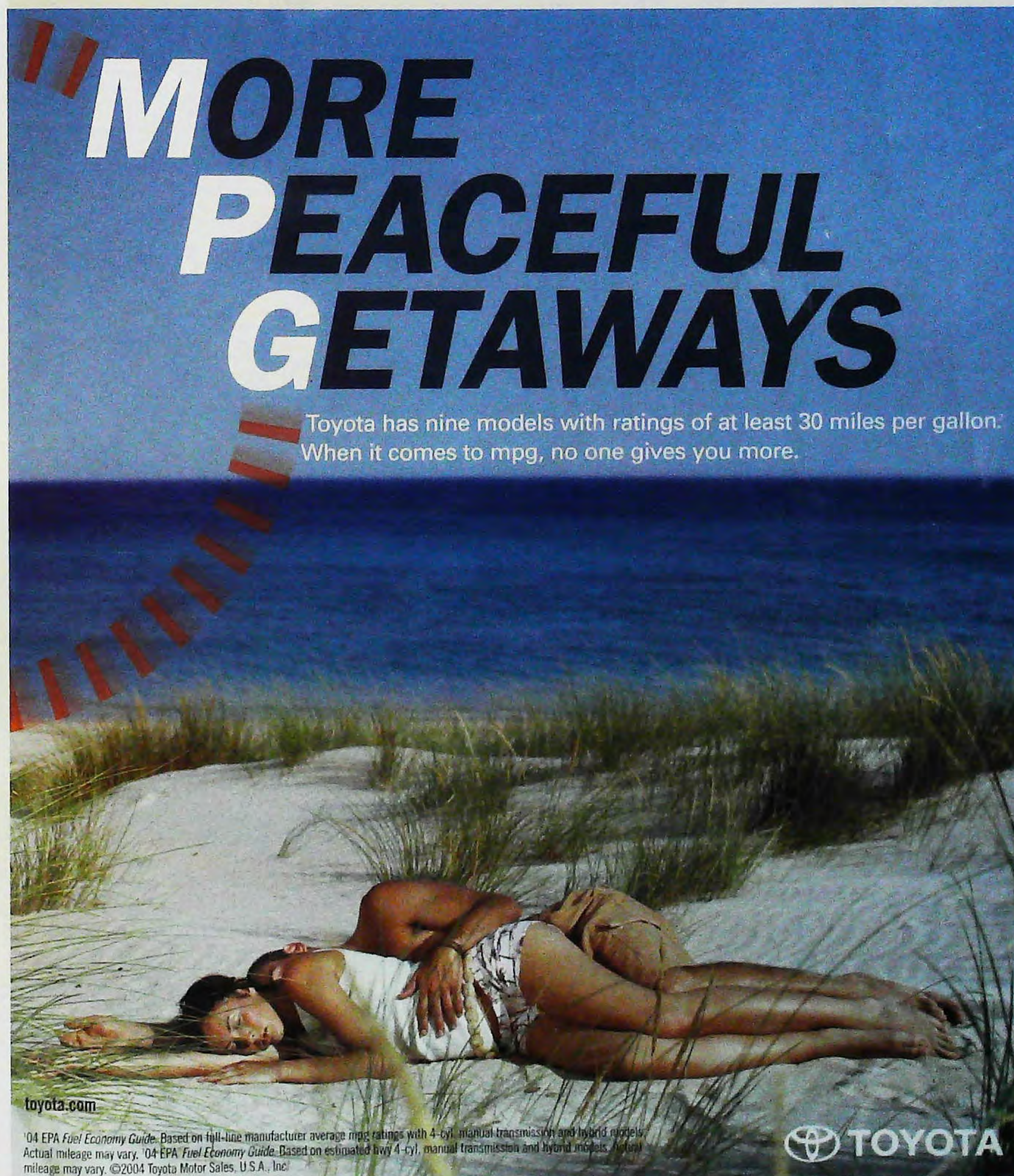
How did John Stevens come to be? Did you fashion him out of your rib? I think he was fashioned more out of Harry Connick Jr.'s ribs. And probably Alfred E. Newman's.

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